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What is the Salvation Army?



"REFRAIN from these men and let them alone," was the exhortation often to be heard from pulpits about seven years ago, when the Salvation Army had begun to attract a great deal of ecclesiastical attention; but the recommendation, which never had much weight with intelligent or earnest men, is more and more disregarded as, with the progress of years, this strange organization of the poor goes on growing larger and larger, and forcing an ever-increasing number of persons of intelligence and position to become first its friends and then its helpers.

I doubt whether any topic, even including the Irish one, more intensely interests or more invariably divides any circle into which it is introduced, and I confess that one of the most refreshing reliefs we have from the strain of daily anxieties is the amusement afforded to us by the mutual contradictions of our critics and observers in different parts of the world, coupled with the utter ignorance of all the facts connected with our work, which is their one point of similarity. There are, however, I fear, two very sad reasons for the general vacuity manifested when the Salvation Army is discussed by the wealthier classes. In the first place, there is so terrible a gap between the rich and the masses of the poor, that the former find as great a difficulty in appreciating a religious question connected with the latter as if they were called upon to state their impressions with

regard to the average amount of sincere belief existing among the Druids or the Druses. Quite recently men of the highest intelligence have been exhibiting in the London Press their idea that "those who attend no place of worship" and "the lowest and most degraded classes" were convertible terms, apparently in utter unconsciousness of the fact that out of our metropolitan population of five millions, only two millions are to be seen in all the churches, chapels, and meeting-rooms on any given Sunday, there being no less than three millions who take no more notice of the national religion than do Chinese or Mohammedan visitors to this city. How many village squires, I wonder, are still unconscious of the absolute irreligion prevailing around them? A dreamy half-realization that the Church is not exactly in touch with the crowd has been produced by the unwonted activity of many of the clergy during the last decade or two; but who really distresses himself because the village tap-rooms are full and the village church almost empty from Sunday to Sunday?

Worse even than this blindness of the wealthy to the spiritual destitution of the multitude is the growing indefiniteness of faith amongst the educated. The progress of so-called refinement has almost dismissed the word "infidel" from our vocabulary; but is not this very fact one indication of the general, the almost universal, loss of those clear perceptions and absolute convictions with regard to what is true and what is false which are indispensable as the foundation of anything worthy of the name of Christian faith? How can a community which is "not quite sure" whether the Scriptures were Divinely inspired, whether God ever did, or ever does communicate directly with His creatures, understand the sight of myriads of poor men and women at prayer?

No wonder that the Salvation Army should so utterly puzzle its more learned observers, especially seeing that observations of it are generally taken either at telescopic distance or amid the hurly-burly of the streets. But no wonder either that we who know it best cherish ever-increasing hopes that in addition to all that may be done directly by its services, God may use it in no small measure to bridge the gulf that divides the rich from the poor, and to renew in many a doubting heart that faith in a present personal Saviour which can alone survive the stormy shocks of years.

Whatever others may imagine as to our self-assertion or self-

confidence, we who from within and from behind, so to speak, have watched the rise and growth of this Army can only regard it as the great miracle of the century, especially calculated to convince men of all nations that the God of the Bible, the God of Pentecost, still verifies the grand promises made to His Apostles ; that Jesus Christ still glories in choosing the weak things of this world to confound the mighty, and has still power on earth not only to forgive sin, but to transform the opposing sinner into a champion of righteousness, instantaneously, just as He created man in His own image at the first. I challenge any reasonable man carefully to examine into the facts of this Army's present existence and to account for its production and maintenance in such an age as ours by any other theory.

This thing has not been "done in a corner." It was near the junction of the Mile End and Cambridge Roads that on Sunday morning, July 5th, 1865, I took my stand to begin, as I supposed, a fortnight's services amongst the poor of the East End. During twelve years of public ministry preceding that day, I had longed to find a way to the ears and hearts of those who never entered any place of worship ; but I had never before fully realized that this was the supreme religious problem of the day. It is one thing to read or think of the multitudes who keep no holy day, it is another thing to stand in the midst of them ; to see a London Sunday market at its worst ; to watch the dense stream of impoverished humanity as it flows on its hopeless, godless course during hours when those who believe in Jesus Christ are expected to assemble together to worship Him. But deeply as my heart was stirred that day, and gladly as I welcomed the call that seemed to come from earth and Heaven alike to devote the remainder of my life exclusively to labour for the salvation of the masses, I had not the remotest idea that even by a lifetime of effort I should be able to establish a great organization capable of self-sustentation and of expansion throughout the whole world.

Slowly, very slowly at first, the little East End mission grew. Some of our brass bands of to-day would scarcely consider rooms such as were then our largest preaching-places suitable for their practice. At the end of our first ten years we were only at work in eight towns outside of the metropolis. The thirty-two Evangelists who were then employed in the work were only holding 304 services per week. But already the

astonishing rate of progress which has attracted so much attention in later years was beginning, for even those small figures represented a 50 per cent. advance upon 1874. We were still in name "The Christian Mission," but we had become an army, and a conquering army too, almost without knowing it. The editor of a Christian weekly paper, who attended our anniversary that year, did us the honour to head his report of the meeting "Successors of the Apostles," and to say, "If Mr. and Mrs. Booth had done nothing more than call forth this grand band of devoted men from the haunts of sin to be preachers of God's gospel they would have left a deep mark on their generation."

Those ten years had taught us many lessons. How could we help clinging with more or less tenacity to the traditions we had received during so many years of ministry among the Methodists? How could we help thinking at first, that to be an effective preacher a man must be taught homiletics; that the services of the mission room must as nearly as possible follow the routine of the chapel, and that stability in an organization must depend largely upon the popular election of committees and the multiplication of formalities? But we saw more and more clearly the folly of attempting to put new wine into old bottles, and we have always, by God's grace, been kept in a state of discontent with past achievements, and of anxiety to learn how to benefit a larger number of souls. When we saw that a fiddle well played would draw more men from the public-house to the meeting, than the announcement of a reverend preacher, we announced the fiddle; and when we found that a fiddler who was utterly incapable of speaking in pulpit language, could rivet the attention and arouse the consciences of such a crowd by talking to them in the simple Psalmist style about what God had done for his soul, we ceased to impose upon such men the duty of sermonising. We began to judge every tree boldly by its fruits, feeling certain that God was best pleased with those agents and those plans which brought back to Him the largest number of prodigals. When we discovered that women were not only as capable and as useful as men upon the platform, but had equal ability as leaders in every form of work, we gave them positions equal to those of their brethren. And then Committeedom was doomed. The most devoted of both sexes became the most influential, although they were the least inclined to move and second resolutions. The lovers of

form were left behind, whilst in the ever-increasing eagerness for action and delight in success our people became more and more willing without debate to follow leaders in whom their confidence was more and more justified.

The process of the Army's extensions, continuing up to the present day, with very little change in its main features since the hour in 1878 when we despatched the first two "Hallelujah lasses," as the pitmen of the North called them, to establish a station in a colliery village by Tyneside, should interest every student of human nature. Two young men or women are sent into a town where a hall or a building of some kind—perhaps an unused warehouse or workshop—has been taken for their services, but where no one has promised to assist them in any way. Their first services are announced by advertisements or posters of an unusual description, and it matters not in what country of the world the coming of the Salvation Army is proclaimed, a crowd of the most unbelieving and misconducted sort is all but certain to assemble to see and hear this new thing. Rough men, who have come together resolved to "upset" the service, speedily find themselves silenced, mastered, overwhelmed in a manner they cannot account for. They come prepared by all the accounts they have read of the Army to see a "mockery of religion," a "sort of theatrical performance," carried on in defiance of everything sacred and true, for the purpose of making money to support "lazy vagabonds who will not work," or at best "crazy fanatics." One can easily understand the astonishment of hearers possessed by such notions when they find themselves face to face with a few plain men and women whose every look and word testifies that their one object is to urge upon every one's attention simple truths which have been familiar to Christian minds ever since the days of the Apostles. Generally speaking, before their first meeting is over the Army's officers have gained a manifest hold upon many hearts, and in any country where demonstrations out of doors are permitted, they are soon able to march a few recruits through the streets. Men who enter their Hall laughing at the prospect of "the fun" which they anticipate, are seen before the day closes praying for the first time in their lives, and although press men and ecclesiastics may attribute all that occurs to "a wave of passing excitement," somehow or other there is in a few weeks a Salvation Army Corps formed, a settled congregation assembled, in short, a Mission holding some score of meetings per week established.

Ten years later you find the work going on with as much of the excitement as ever. And so it has come to pass that the Salvation Army, whose originator stood alone less than 24 years ago, has in 31 countries and colonies 2593 corps, under the leadership of 7109 officers, wholly employed in the work, who are holding 2,300,000 services per annum in 25 languages, and publishing 27 weekly newspapers, with a united sale of upwards of 31,000,000 copies per annum.

And what comes of all this? There are found those, even in religious circles, who would have us believe that our labours have only resulted in "unique failure;" that "whilst we may have induced persons who were religiously inclined to abandon "more decorous forms" of service for our more interesting meetings, where their good taste has been spoiled and "their whole nature degraded and debased," we have signally failed in the great object of turning men from wickedness to righteousness. Against such astounding assertions I will press only two facts. We seat in the United Kingdom every Sunday upwards of 700,000 persons in our meeting-places. Will any one pretend that during the past ten years, which have seen the opening of most of these buildings by us, there has been any serious decrease in the attendance at other places of worship? Is it not notorious, taking the country generally, that the contrary has been the case?

Again, the Army, in the central funds received at its various headquarters in different parts of the world, and in the united incomes of its 2593 corps, has now a revenue exceeding £750,000 per annum. Have the revenues of churches, missions, and other benevolent institutions materially decreased during the past ten years? Has there not, on the contrary, been a previously unparalleled lavishness of expenditure in the erection of churches, the founding of bishoprics, &c.? Do not these facts demonstrate beyond dispute that we are correct in declaring that we have drawn our supplies of men and money mainly from the streets and public-houses? In comparison with the vast necessities of the world, or even of this island, we are painfully conscious of the little we have yet been able to accomplish; but remembering that it is only twenty years since we emerged from the East End of London, we think the progress already made gives every encouragement to a great faith as to our future. The 7109 men and women officers whose lives are devoted to the war have very few of them as yet attained

thirty years of age: 212 of them have already proved their ability to direct the movements of others over wide tracts of country, and even should our progress during the next decade be no faster than during the past one, we shall surely have established in the world a force whose power for good, already recognized by governments as well as by individuals, it will be no longer possible to dispute.

Why then are we "everywhere spoken against?" We are not, and by God's grace never will be, a sect. We avoid as the most deadly of poisons the coming amongst us of any of that spirit of enmity against any other religious organization which forms the germ of sectarianism; and we have, thank God! our avowed friends not only amongst every sect in Christendom, but amongst every class of religionists or anti-religionists with whom we have so far come in contact. Jews and Agnostics, Catholics and Protestants, Mohammedans, Hindoos, Buddhists and Zulus, have welcomed our officers to their homes, and assured them that they valued the good work they were doing. And yet from the pulpit and the press, as well as in the drawing-room and the railway carriage, the most extreme denunciations of ourselves, our teachings and our practices, are continually to be heard. Why? Is it not simply because we are "a peculiar people"—peculiar of necessity in order to do a peculiar work? Let us examine this question closely.

I. The vehemence manifested by our people everywhere is one of the commonest objections heard; and no one would object more strongly than myself if it could be shown that our heat was merely external, and was not the product of intense faith and devotion. No one outside the Salvation Army can have any idea of the amount of trouble that is taken continually to check any simulation of a fervour that does not really exist in the heart. But if we are told that we give too great an amount of attention to the emotional as contrasted with the reasoning faculties, I can only reply that in the most important deliberative assemblies in the world there may be seen, whenever men become desperately in earnest upon any topic, however insignificant in itself, displays of feeling quite as enthusiastic as any that have yet been witnessed at our meetings; and that I am continually oppressed with the feeling that the Story of the Cross has never yet been allowed to move men's hearts, and call forth their energies in any way at all proportionate to its importance.

There seems to be a general understanding now-a-days that whatever can be called "loud" is also vulgar. The meaning of the word "vulgar" itself appears to me to be very obscure. The term is always used as one of reproach even when applied to those who, like us, professedly live for the good of the common people. But if by vulgarity is to be understood something uncouth and objectionable, how or by whom this standard of vulgarity is to be ascertained I am at a loss to imagine. It is considered decidedly vulgar, for example, to wear a scarlet jacket with words inscribed upon it for the purpose of arousing thereby attention to the truths of religion. But to wear a scarlet jacket bearing no such inscription, but so formed and decorated as to signify that its wearer is rich may be, and was recently, the height of fashion! For a mayor who is, say, a brewer, with a court of aldermen, several of whom are publicans, to march in procession behind a brass band and a big drum to a church in which these magnates take no very deep interest at other times, is considered a most decorous proceeding. But for a set of poor men and women to march in the same style and with the same musical accompaniment to a place of worship, whose congregations are largely collected and whose services are chiefly maintained by their loving and voluntary assistance, is pronounced eminently vulgar, if not a "travesty of religion." To sing in the church, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord," is perfectly proper, but to make such a noise either outside or inside that sacred edifice will be pronounced "dreadful," "a public nuisance that ought to be put down." Now could not the critics of the Salvation Army hold a national convention and settle once for all just what is, and what is not, a proper degree of religious fervour, and a proper mode of giving expression to it? Nothing is more common than for us to be told that we "offend the sensibilities of all persons of refinement;" nothing more uncommon than to find any two such persons in agreement as to what ought and what ought not to be done to arouse men's attention to spiritual matters, and to give thanks unto the Lord and declare His doings amongst the people.

2. Our absolute form of government is strangely enough objected to quite as strongly as the manifestations of excited feeling which might naturally be supposed to be irrepressible by any less strong *régime*. It is suggested that there is something almost approaching to sacrilege in the interference of a

vigorous central will with the absolute freedom of individual judgment in connection with religion. We are asked, in the most innocent way, to produce scriptural authority for the form of government which we think is the only one God ever imposed upon His people. That the submission of men to an absolute control in matters of religion, or in fact in any matters whatever is not in harmony with the spirit of the age, we heartily admit. If the spirit of the age were one of submission to God, the Salvation Army would have no right to exist. That we succeed so widely, even in Republican countries, is, we think, one of the most striking evidences of the adaptation of our government, both to answer the Divine end, and to satisfy modern needs.

Our authority is neither enforced by pains nor penalties, nor even by the internal pressure of sacred vows; but the Army consists of persons so absolutely united in their convictions as to the best use of time and strength, and so thoroughly resolved to give themselves up as far as their opportunities will allow to the accomplishment of the common enterprise, that they gladly accept the only form of government capable of utilising such a force to the utmost extent.

3. Our "military jargon" would scarcely be sneered at or objected to so much if our critics had any idea of the extent to which organization and discipline are carried amongst us. When we announce Sarah Jones as a "captain," we are not surprised at contemptuous sneers or remarks about "sham titles" from persons entirely ignorant of our work. But any one who attempts to dispute the wishes of a petticoated officer whose command is exercised in probably the largest building in the town, will discover that they have a very unmistakable authority to deal with, and those who take the trouble to observe closely enough in the manner in which she commands her corps of two or three hundred soldiers day after day, and the hearty and ready way in which her orders are accepted and carried out, will find it extremely difficult to suggest a word that would express her position more correctly and clearly than the title we give her. So far from there being any of the "pretence" or "assumption" which is generally supposed to be connected with the use of military titles by us, those which are used to describe our higher grades are really far below the ones which similar positions in Her Majesty's service would carry with them. A Salvation Army Major is frequently a man who has under his

control from twenty to forty corps, scattered over a tract of country which may be hundreds of square miles in extent, over the whole of which he is expected to exercise his power to do good. Such a man is sent with one or two helpers into a territory remote from any other occupied by this Army, and within a few months he is able to report that he has formed several corps, out of which he is producing officers by whom to extend his operations more and more widely. He has, in fact, raised a native army, absolutely independent of help from any other part of the field. Surely such a man, even if he be much at sea about English grammar, is as deserving of the title of major as some of the "retired" gentlemen whose past services to the country or its army it would be so difficult to discover.

And just so all the way through our military arrangements and phraseology. No one can be more anxious than ourselves to avoid even the semblance of unreality. If the men and women who purchase and wear our uniform are not as perfectly separated from the rest of the world, and as truly given up to the service of God and their country as that uniform is intended to indicate, we can only say that we know no better plans than we are at present adopting to ensure such a state of things, and that as soon as we can discover such we will gladly adopt them. I am confident, however, that nine-tenths of the objectors to our uniform and badges would be silenced if they could only be induced to wear something of a similar kind for twenty-four hours themselves. How many of our critics would be found capable of enduring an afternoon, say in Oxford Street, with an "S." on their collar?

If the objection be to the "obtrusion" of one's religion on public notice by such means as these, I can only reply that my astonishment increases the longer I observe the fact that the Salvation Army should stand so much alone in Christendom in this respect. Why should those who profess to believe in "the Saviour of the world" be, of all the religionists in it, the most unwilling to wear upon their persons, or manifest amid the circumstances of every-day life, any indication of their faith? The other day I was shown a portrait of poor young Dinizulu, and I noticed that he had not hesitated to exhibit a string of charms above the glories of an English suit of clothes. Salvationists at any rate will not allow it to be said that the superstitious savages of pagan lands are more inclined to acknowledge before

men the god they worship or fear, than those who profess to live in the full blaze of a complete Divine revelation.

4. The *War Cry* and other publications of the Army have been more or less proverbs of reproach amongst our critics for no other reason, apparently than, that they have reported the sayings and doings of the Army correctly, instead of having made a false representation with regard to them. Now with respect to the language used in the meetings and writings of the Army, as well as the many peculiarities of manner and style, there is one general principle to be constantly borne in mind. In judging how to regulate these things we have only two courses open to us: one, to leave the people free to express their thoughts and feelings in their own way; the other, to place them under continual restraint. The latter course has been adopted by the churches with results so fatal, as to have produced a revolt on the part of the most intelligent and energetic leaders of every denomination. For us to adopt this traditional policy of constraining every one to cease to be natural whenever they desired to become religious, would be to close our doors practically to the masses at one stroke. We have only then the alternative of absolute liberty in connection with which there must needs be frequently mistake, and mistake sufficiently serious to bring upon us more or less of obloquy. But look at the result of our liberty as demonstrated by our newspapers alone. We have twenty-seven of them published weekly in as many countries. The contributors are unpaid; the editors are all officers engaged more or less in holding meetings, and many of the papers are carried from door to door by salesmen and women who labour freely in their leisure time. No advertisement has ever been received for payment; nothing of the nature of fiction ever allowed. Here are twenty-seven weeklies occupied exclusively with the one topic of the Army—the salvation of men; produced by writers who have had no previous literary training. And yet our aggregate of sales eclipses that of any of the Christian newspapers issued by the most wealthy, learned, and wide-spread religious denominations. In New Zealand our *War Cry* has a larger circulation, we believe, than that of any secular paper, our weekly sale of 17,000 copies being equivalent to one for every seven of the adult population. In France and Switzerland we sell 15,000 copies of our journals weekly, the largest circulation of any other religious paper being, we understand, under 10,000 weekly, and we have only been at

work in France for eight years. If these facts do not demonstrate that the Army is meeting an almost universally-felt want of the human race, and raising up a huge working-class religious constituency, who find its free, happy services precisely suited to meet their highest needs, I do not know to what cause to attribute these astonishing successes.

It has been the fashion for critics who were anxious to give a certain air of impartiality to their attacks upon us, to throw in paragraphs of admiration for the writings and addresses of Mrs. Booth, forgetting that the rough men and women with whom they wished to contrast her, were only carrying out her exhortations with that fearless disregard of human opinion which she has always so strongly inculcated. But whatever may be said with regard to her books, which remain to this day uncontested and scarcely attacked, no one would think of putting down the success of the Army's speakers and writers generally to any striking display of human ability ; and if they have not won their hearers and readers by sincere and effectual appeals to conscience, I know not to what cause to attribute the fact that the common people have heard and read them so gladly.

5. Yet the Army is everywhere opposed and persecuted, and these very oppositions and persecutions are also made an objection against it. During 1888 no less than 125 summonses were issued against members of the Army in this country alone, two of my own children being included in the number upon whom this honour was bestowed. Yet we have never lost a case in which it has been possible for us to appeal from the decisions of local authorities, and in the only instance (that of Torquay) in which our action has been undoubtedly contrary to existing law, the Legislature has confirmed our opinion that we were really in the right by repealing the outrageous clause, smuggled into a local Act, under which our people were so frequently imprisoned.

It is notorious that we are continually working in the interests of law and order ; that we treat the representatives of authority everywhere with the utmost respect, and that no attempt to injure any person in reputation or property has ever been brought home to us. So that we maintain that all these oppositions and persecutions are so many certificates to the fact that we are following in the footsteps of the Apostles, disturbing and obstructing only the progress of evil,

and suffering under the attacks only of those who prefer evil to good.

Notwithstanding that in the face of so much opposition, and so many objections, we have continued to advance so rapidly, there are still those, no doubt, who confidently predict our early dissolution, and as I shall this April attain my threescore years, they have at least one ready excuse for their calculations.

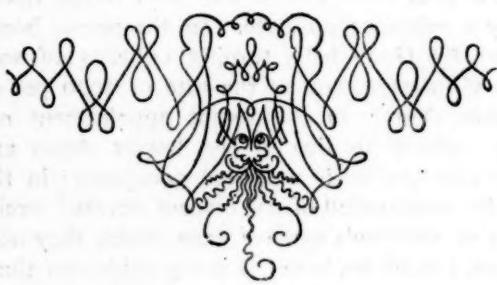
The old theories about our issuing "no balance-sheets;" the "huge fortune" I was said to be amassing, &c., are hardly dead yet, in spite of the most complete proofs to the contrary produced in our reports and balance-sheets year after year. But those who have any idea at all of the extent of the Army's property; of the fact, for example, that we are paying for the buildings we use in this country alone, rentals amounting to more than £100,000 annually, can no longer imagine me, or any other general, personally appropriating the property thus held in trust for the Army, nor can they be persuaded that the whole organization can some day vanish away like a dream. They may suppose that we run a serious risk in the other direction, that of hardening into a wealthy and respectable society, too much occupied with its own interests to care about the poor millions outside. To such fears I trust our most recent developments may supply a sufficient antidote. In the rescue homes where we are now, by God's help, turning outcasts of society into honest and virtuous women at the rate of 1000 per annum in Great Britain alone; in the recent appointment of no less than sixty officers to live in the lowest slums and labour exclusively amongst their wretched occupants; in the raising up within the same period of 104 officers devoted exclusively to the holding of children's services, from which they obtain their own support, I think we have so many evidences that we still possess the spirit and the dew of our youth, and that those who wish to see the end of the Army should pray for long life.

Our effort to provide decent food and shelter for the myriads of the metropolis, whose daily income can only be counted in pence, may merely be temporary, should the country be sufficiently aroused to deal with the question as thoroughly as it demands. But meanwhile, in spite of the carpings of those who would hinder our doing this work, although they have no alternative plan to propose but the organization of hard-heartedness, we are gaining the gratitude and confidence of the millions who look at the subject from the poor man's point of view, and

are winning friends amongst those who had previously thought us entirely beneath their notice.

Yet let no one suppose that I base my calculations with regard to the future upon any reliance on men's favour. Others may account for the Salvation Army as they please, I know that it has been brought into existence, built up and sustained from the beginning until now, only by the power that raised Jesus from the dead, and so long as the Army trusts in that power alone, it will continue to grow and conquer.

WILLIAM BOOTH.



A Talk about Experts.

NOWADAYS there is often more card-playing than conversation in the smoking-room of one of the Atlantic "Liners." Formerly the room devoted to "Santa Nicotina" was far smaller, and it was only the passengers hardened against sea-sickness who ventured into the thick reek of the confined cabin. This was especially the case when the vessel was pitching or rolling much. Then indeed the company became select enough, but often all the pleasanter, for the men composing it had seen much, and could recount many a curious experience. One day the wind blew almost a hurricane, and after an attempt to keep on our way as though nothing were happening, the Captain gave in, for he found that the strain on even his strong vessel was too great when she was driven hard against the heavy seas, and he "lay to" with the bow of the steamer to the wind. The heavy hills of water came threateningly towards us, the spray from their ridges were blown so thickly over us that even aft a man got drenched through if he stayed on deck. But the ship was too buoyant to allow "green seas" to make more than an occasional incursion over the "turtle back" which sheltered our forecastle, and those among us who were not sick were happy, knowing there was no danger, and few of them being specially anxious to make a very rapid voyage. As the evening fell, and the vessel patiently mounted the heavy billows and kicked up her heels as they rushed and roared from under her, a few of us ventured in overalls out of the saloon, and watching our opportunities to get safe footing, reached the smoking-room door and sat round the little place, after laying aside our gleaming waterproofs. A cosy well-lighted "snuggery" we thought it, and pipe and cigar were soon doing their best to darken the candle-light.

"Well, they say it's beastly, all this, down below, but it's comfortable enough up here for an hour or two anyway," said a

sailor-like man, whom we knew to be a merchant skipper. "If they'd only have given this old vessel good bilge keels, we shouldn't have had so much complaining of the rolling, as we have had down below."

"Bilge keels!" replied a gentleman who was a large ship-builder on the Clyde, and was returning from America to his home. "Bilge keels, I don't believe a bit in them. They do us no good, and make the vessel heavier in a rolling sea, and slower in fine weather. Depend upon it, they're nothing but a superstition. They make it awkward for a ship to go into some narrow docks, they are a small extra expense in the building, and they're regular frauds to my mind."

Another of our party declared he could not agree with this, as he had crossed the Atlantic many times, and there and elsewhere where heavy seas had been encountered, had always found the bilge keels a great preventive of rolling.

"I can't say that I'm an expert in these matters," he continued, "and you, sir," addressing the ship-builder, "have much more claim to the title, but I am sorry I can't agree with you."

"Nor can I,"—"Nor I," said two others; and a third said, "I am not a ship-builder or owner myself, but I have many friends among them, and know almost as much about their opinions as if I were, and I never found any good in those side keels. Why what good can a strip a foot or a little more wide, running along like a shelf down below water, do, on the side of a great hulk like a vessel of this rating? The things only get in the way in a dock and do no good outside in a sea-way."

Several of us disagreed with this; but here was a case of the "doctors differing," and the opinion of the company was summed up pretty accurately by one speaker, who said, "I should have thought if a ship-builder like you, sir, said that they are no use they must be worthless; but I and several others have felt the steadiness of many vessels furnished with them, and until it's proved that the vessel without the bilge keels would have been as steady, we must take leave to side with those who provide their vessels with them."

"If any one knows about a ship's tricks I should certainly do so," energetically protested the ship-builder, "and I tell you they are no good."

"Well, sir, I know several ship-builders, and without for a moment saying anything to disparage your general conclusions,

on that point I beg to differ, for my friends *do* always put those side keels."

"Seems to me, you gentlemen won't agree," said a Southerner from South Carolina, "and it's not the first time I have been struck by the fact that those who ought to know better, just know as little as the rest of the world."

"Well, that's putting it broadly, anyhow," laughed a Northerner.

"Mean no disrespect, gentlemen," said the South Carolinian, "but you men of the North took a juster view of one matter on which we Southerners might have been considered experts, than we did ourselves. In saying this, you see, I mean no disrespect except to our own Southern opinions on one special point."

"What was that?" was asked.

"I'm coming to it; but we don't hurry up in speaking as much as you do in the North, or in England either. What I mean is that we were all wrong on the question of the future of the nigger when the South was defeated. We held that the negro was happy and thriving in the state in which we believed Providence had placed him, and that from the good food, good living and care that was his while a slave, his race had become numerous. We thought that when he was made his own master he would not know how to use the privilege, and that he would take to drink and other things that would wipe him out. All of us said the Blacks would crowd into the cities and die of disease, liquor, and license. But we were wrong, though we ought to have been experts on that subject at least, and the Blacks are more numerous than ever—so numerous that it looks as if our gulf states would become wholly coloured in most parts."

"We could match such cases of wrong conclusions drawn from well-known premisses from Europe," said one of our number, who appeared to have served in the British army. "We all know that the army is naturally a strongly conservative body, especially where, as in England, it is a small army drawn from a comparatively limited section of the people, both as regards officers and men. The officers are mostly county proprietors' sons, and the rank and file do not belong to the middle classes. Therefore an officer, even without taking into account the naturally authoritative cast of mind acquired by him in common with most schoolmasters, acquires a habit of command that makes him intolerant of free debate, or of anything like levelling up or levelling down. And this cast of mind curiously affects his views even as regards changes that time may make necessary

in his profession of arms. He does not like change, often because he thinks he and his predecessors in command have done well enough without it. He is also much influenced by the comradeship which leads him to admire gallant men of other armies with whom he has served. So that although he may be a fair-minded man, and open on other matters to see impartially, yet on matters connected with his own calling he may be—expert though you may consider him—less able to judge correctly than many an outsider who has never seen an army in the field."

"I shall dispute that," said a younger man, who told us he was also in the army.

"I think," said the first, "I can bear out my assertion. Was it not generally the case that both at the outbreak of the Austrian-Prussian war in 1866, and at the beginning of the Franco-German war in 1870, English military opinion inclined to the belief that the Austrians in the one case, and the French in the other, would win? Several good authorities had nevertheless seen both armies. But with the French our fellows had become familiar and friendly in the Crimean war, and with the Austrians there was somehow a feeling that they were such good fellows they could not be beaten. Then, as regards the superiority of the needle-gun as against the old muzzle-loader, of which some wise men told us a great deal, did not a far greater number of wise military know-all declare that such a quick-firing rifle was a most dangerous thing to the troops who used them, and not so much to the enemy, because in the flurry of action all but the most seasoned war-veteran would fire away his cartridges and be left defenceless, except for the bayonet? Why it is even now declared by many that the repeating rifle exposes troops to a similar danger, and the ease with which ammunition for rifles may be carried along with the column in rear is almost lost sight of. Until Nachod and Skalitz opened the British experts' eyes, they would contentedly have let Tommy Atkins go into action with Brown Bess against the best repeating rifles. It is only when John Bull has seen his favourite licked into a cocked hat that he begins to think there can be anything wrong with any time-honoured British notion. Why before the Crimean war it was exactly the same story, and if it had not been for Lord Hardinge's insistence on some of the men being armed with the Minié rifle, there would have been nothing but Brown Bess of the Peninsular pattern on the slopes of Alma or in the trenches before Sebastopol."

The M.P. continued the conversation.

"But there is another case of an expert's being all wrong, and leading many astray, and doing for himself, and who do you think that is—or, rather, was?"

"Who?" we asked.

"None other than Gordon—General Gordon," he replied.

"Why, how's that?" said one of our American friends. "I thought he was no expert, except in Bible knowledge and in Chinese fighting."

"None the less, he thought he knew all about the people's ideas in the Soudan," continued the M.P., "and people took him at his word, and when he said he'd go and set everything straight, all the British press believed him, and they could not have believed an honester man, and wrote and shouted and prayed their Government to send out Gordon, and he would soon settle matters. And he believed it himself, and was considered an expert in that matter. The General declared he knew how to handle matters, that he would make some of the chief men small sultans, and they would side with him, and he could direct them against Arab slave-drivers and followers of the new False Prophet, and they would be as wax in his hands. And so poor Gordon was persuaded to relinquish a comfortable berth given him on the Congo by King Leopold of Belgium, and went willingly, and with full faith that all would go well, to the Nile. He hadn't reckoned with the great fanatical force that had arisen around the Mahdi. His confidence infected the Government, and the end of it was that this most noble man, because he was taken for an expert, was left too long without support—and when the expedition came near him, it was too late. Khartoum had been "rushed," and one of the most simple and gallant men this century has seen was butchered, and all connected with the affair won't, I think, trust an expert's opinion again so easily."

"You may be right, but the best horses will fall if put at impossible places," said a young Englishman present, "and the prettiest-looking hoofs will go if you hack 'em along hard roads," he continued sadly, as if he had spoilt several and had found it expensive.

"You English gentlemen," said an Austrian nobleman who had been making a sporting tour as far West as the Rockies, "ought to know all about horses; but your care of them, experts as you are, spoils their feet, and none of them have hoofs that

stand well. Near Trieste, in the Emperor of Austria's studs, we have proved that. The horses there never see any ground but a hard limestone plateau until they are sent to Vienna. Their exercise grounds are all on hard stone, and the horses are not shod, and the consequence is that we produce hoofs hard enough to stand almost anything. We have tried the mixture of English and Hungarian blood, but we find that this immediately gives the young soft feet, and we keep to our limestone and rocky plateau nurtured horses for breeding now."

"Blessed if I don't feel a 'tender foot myself!'" exclaimed one of the Americans, for a "know nothing" or a "green one" is called "a tender foot" out West.

"The moral is," said the English M.P., "that you must believe only what you see as a rule, only your vision, not anybody's pre-vision."

"Yes, you've about hit it, sir," concluded one of the Americans. "Teach a youngster to trust his sight; but to trust any one to know anything because he knew something once upon a time, or thinks he may know something again, is to confide too much in frail human nature."

"And," added our other Transatlantic cousin, "I consider Americans as quite elegant experts in the English language, to judge by the testimony of those who reckon you've as many dialects as counties in England; yet I conclude I may say without further ceremony that I guess I've but a one-horse knowledge of that tongue myself!"

"Talking of conservatism," said the Southerner, "it's that same conservatism that made you, under General Pakenham, throw your troops right up against the American trenches near New Orleans when we separated from you. You didn't believe that Provincials could shoot straight, and it lost you the States."

"Glad to hear such a patriotic speech from a Southerner," observed the Yankee. "Shows that reconstruction's made progress down South."

"Could match that with some stories from Virginia in 1862!" exclaimed the "Reconstructed" one; but the Old countrymen "had the floor" now, and a further illustration of the subject of the conversation came from an English M.P., who struck in with a slow, "I think we can match that kind of thing too."

"How's that?" sharply asked one of the Americans.

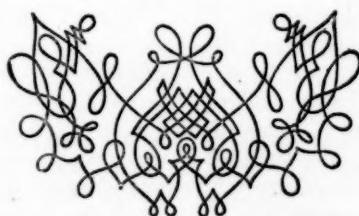
"I was thinking," continued the Englishman, "of some of our recent experiences in the old country as regards Ireland, and

the question that has divided the Liberal Party in regard to the treatment of the so-called Home Rule question. You know that Mr. Gladstone is our oldest 'Parliamentary hand'—a title he gave himself with a justice that none can dispute. You would imagine that it was hardly possible for so wise an old Parliamentary hand to make any mistake about the most evident and immediate Parliamentary probabilities. But, as you know, so it was. Mr. Gladstone formed a Government after the 1885 elections with the programme of 'enquiring and examining' into the Irish question, and held that it would not be necessary to do more than enquire and examine for a full year, or, at all events, thereabouts. And yet all his calculations in this respect proved wrong, for in about two months he was compelled to formulate a plan which has split the Liberal Party, and played the devil with his party's chances."

"Yes, just so," said the Clyde ship-builder, "he thought that he could save his ship rolling by clapping on two bilge keels, the exclusion of Irish members from Westminster, and the great payment to landlords, and then he found his bilge keels prevented his ship from entering dock, and she has to lie out rolling in the trough of the seas, 'nough to sicken most on board."

We laughed at the far-fetched simile, and one of us said, "now the talk 's becoming political, I shall shut up." We all concluded to do the same, and retired to our berths to dream that our expert captain's observations must be all wrong, and that it would take us probably a month instead of a week to reach port. The rule, however, was again proved by the exception, and we found pleasure ultimately in agreeing that nautical experts were, after all, the most trustworthy.

LORNE.



The Work of County Councils.

MY object in this article is to endeavour to consider some of the more vexed and doubtful questions that lie upon the border-land of local administration and imperial legislation. How much will hereafter be entrusted to the County Councils will be decided by the manner in which they perform their present specific duties ; but, without encroaching upon dim and shadowy speculation, it would be well to pause at the very threshold of Mr. Ritchie's great experiment, to take some bearings of the road, and to examine with some consideration the courses to be adopted.

We are now endeavouring to erect from below a power and an organization which shall supply new wants, as well as fulfil the exceedingly able administration of an unrepresentative system that had existed for hundreds of years in the counties. The Local Government Bill of last year has opened a completely new chapter in English history, and is the most important measure passed since the great Reform Bill. Perhaps one of the most important results of the Act is the emerging of London from an inchoate mass of conflicting and obscure jurisdictions into the greatest administrative entity in the world. Nor is the question of Local Government, divorced from its parochial and petty aspects, other than the compressed, concentrated name for the central and the vital movement of English politics. I wish to keep quite clear of the Irish controversy ; but, apart from the passionate and personal aspects of the question, it is in Ireland, as it is elsewhere, the relation between the domain of imperial and local government that forms the pivot of the struggle.

In England, where nothing is logical—and you might therefore say that this is what might have been expected—we have taught the people to govern the Empire first and them-

selves afterwards. In 1832 the middle class dispossessed the aristocracy of their supremacy, while the Reform Bills of 1867 and 1885 placed in the hands of the people the supreme political power. During the greater part of this century, after much agitation, after careful experience, at intervals—I think I might say after each step has justified the supporters of reform and belied the fears of its opponents—the present electoral system has been constructed. Within five years of universal household suffrage, both parties in the State acquiesced in throwing open to the people at large the control of local affairs. The popular suffrage hurries us along, and makes us sometimes overlook in the hurry the dangers to be faced. Instead of training the people through a system of local administration to the government of the most complex, as well as the greatest, of human concerns, the British Empire, we have accustomed them to regard their vote as a political contribution to one of the great political parties. I read with great regret a letter from Sir George Trevelyan to a Cardiff correspondent. The letter is not a long one, and it would, I think, be fairer to Sir George to give it in full. It is as follows:—

“ Wallington Cambs, Northumberland.
“ Jan. 19, 1888.

“ DEAR SIR,—You ask me whether, in my opinion, politics ought to enter into the elections for the Welsh County Councils, and I will answer you to the best of my ability. The Local Government Act is so framed that a large share of power which ought to go to the County Councils is left in the hands of the Justices of the Peace. The Justices of Peace are likewise, in virtue of their office, guardians of the poor. In most Welsh counties, Nonconformists and Liberals, who form the enormous majority of the population, are in a very small minority on the bench of Justices. In order, therefore, to give the majority of the population anything like their due influence in the administration of their county, Nonconformists and Liberals should be represented on the County Councils, at least, in the full proportion of their numbers, their intelligence, and their public spirit. In the next place, the powers of the County Council are far less extensive than what the true principles of self-government demand. The Act does not trust the representatives of the people even with such elementary duties as the control of the police and the regulation of the liquor traffic. If the County Councils are filled with men who acquiesce in this limitation of their power, we shall never get those powers enlarged. A candidate who is in favour of a full and complete system of responsible local government should be the only candidate for a Liberal elector. In the third place, every

Welshman ought to remember that while the Parliamentary representatives of Wales are almost unanimous in favour of certain great reforms which concern Wales and Wales alone, their collective opinion goes for nothing in Parliament. The Welsh members are out-voted by the supporters of the Government, and consequently the vast majority of the people in Wales have no influence whatever on the conduct of Welsh affairs in the House of Commons. It is all the more reason why the majority should have its proportionate and legitimate influence at home on the conduct of Welsh affairs in the County Councils, and that influence can only be obtained if the electors vote for Councillors with whom they agree in politics. There is no fear lest by adopting this course you will get an inferior body of Councillors. The experience of two generations of Municipal government in our towns is conclusive on this point. In Birmingham, in Manchester, and in hundreds of other urban communities, candidates are put forward by political Parties, and the result is that those Parties take good care to secure as candidates the most respectable, honourable, and reliable men whom they can find in order to win the fight, and to win it with credit. The standard of personal purity and honesty in our Town Councils is an honour to the nation. On the other hand, the Metropolitan Board of Works was elected on other than political grounds, and the experiment was not encouraging. For these reasons, Welsh Liberals would do well to vote for a candidate of their own way of thinking, if on other grounds he would make a good County Councillor.

“I remain, yours very faithfully,
“GEORGE O. TREVELYAN.”

In my humble opinion, the above letter contains all the evils and all the confusion of purpose which I dread, both in the interest of local administration and its relation to the legislative authority of Parliament. Local Government in the counties was not a practical necessity produced by maladministration on the part of the magistrates; but it was a political necessity, which it is to be hoped will not become a practical hardship in the shape of increased rates. In London alone was a reform in Local Government necessary to replace the discredited and dishonoured control of the Board of Works. But it was not, as Sir George Trevelyan infers, because the Board of Works was not elected on political grounds, that it failed. It failed, as, indeed, it deserved to fail, because its members, in themselves obscure persons, were elected upon a system which was buried in even greater obscurity, and brought them neither within touch nor appreciation of public opinion. London was looked upon by the Board of Works as a happy hunting-ground for plunder and for

jobbery, because its members had not to confront an open popular election ; but neither common sense nor the experience of old corporations (where certainly party feeling ran high) points to contests conducted on party lines as the receipt either for efficiency or for purity in local administration. In London it is because there is a large number of independent ratepayers, who hate the twang of that narrow party-spirit which Sir George Trevelyan need hardly go out of his way to recommend to the Welsh, that Lord Rosebery is returned for a constituency like the City. London, the centre of all our social problems, and the arena, both in the past and in the future, of every social experiment, has at last obtained her own government. At length the inarticulate cry of unrepresented millions has become the voice of a great city. An able, efficient County Council, with a steady and continuous policy of administrative progress, means not only the proper performance of ornamental duties, and the construction of public improvements ; but it means the happiness and the health of countless thousands of humble workers, and, above all and beyond all, it means giving to the inhabitants of London a civic interest and a civic pride. It means also the gift of dignity and public respect to the performance of local duties which have been hitherto discredited.

The success and reputation of the London County Council is beyond provincial interest. In it and to it we are looking for much ; and, if much is forthcoming, much will hereafter be entrusted. Without implying any disrespect to the County Councils that are scattered throughout England, the experiment in London is of such infinite importance, that it is difficult to overlook in any consideration of the main question the influence which it would have upon the conduct and selection of Councillors for London. If the Welsh and other counties follow the advice of Sir George Trevelyan, which seems to be endorsed inferentially by Mr. Morley in his speech at Sheffield, and elect their Councils upon a purely political basis, they will only inflict upon themselves a punishment as foolish as it is gratuitous. The best administrators will not have been selected to perform duties, which are purely administrative and not political. The business of the county will to that extent suffer ; and with the business maladministered the rates will rise. It is equally impossible to understand how the political majority in the Council would influence the political majority in the House of Commons. Sir George Trevelyan impresses the importance

of having a Gladstonian majority in the County Councils, to balance the fact that the Welsh members are out-voted in the House of Commons. "If," he argues, "the Welsh members have no influence on the conduct of Welsh affairs in the House of Commons, it is all the more important that the Gladstonian majority should have its "legitimate" influence at home on the conduct of Welsh affairs in the County Councils. The great point lies in what constitutes legitimate influence.

There are no political functions, no legislative duties, to be performed by the County Councils. They are as purely administrative as were those of the magistrates. It is therefore clearly illegitimate influence to which Sir George Trevelyan and others are looking when they speak of the "legitimate" influence which can be brought to play upon the conduct of local affairs. The experience of municipal government in the towns can tell us nothing as to the popular control of local affairs in the counties. I admit that most of the Town Councils have been elected on party lines, and that while their administration has been more costly than that of the counties, they have maintained good order within their jurisdiction. There is, however, no analogy between municipal boroughs and the Welsh counties. In Wales there exists at present a most serious controversy in respect of tithes, and in other counties it is reasonable to suppose that questions will arise from time to time provocative of more passion than reason, and peculiarly exposed to the machinations of local agitators. The police, or the instruments by which the enforcement of law is to be given effect to, is one of the subjects which, if it depended in Wales upon the control of a Radical County Council, would mean a passive refusal to enforce the payment of any tithe at all. As to the liquor question, Parliament in its wisdom considered it expedient to relieve inexperienced and untried bodies from the turmoil and distraction of such a subject. At the same time, the objection against throwing an apple of discord into the County Councils does not operate against the creation of a popular authority for that purpose alone. The whole question seems to depend upon a balance of evils, and, on the whole, local option *ad hoc* would be preferable to County Councils ostensibly created to secure the ablest men for the administration of county finance, but practically selected to push the case either of the publican or of the teetotaler. The drink question occupies the pre-eminent distinction of dividing local feeling into sharply defined

and organized parties, and of exciting more bitterness than any other. The desire of the ratepayers to control the liquor traffic is reasonable enough ; but it would be fatal to the credit of the County Councils if we were to distract all attention from their main duties, which are not exciting, upon a subject that would engross popular attention. If the electors want their affairs well looked after, they must look after their Councillors, and every Councillor would know that local affairs could be allowed to slide if they only acted up to the professions upon which they were elected as the champions of the "glasses or the masses."

The House of Commons has lost prestige from the wearisome debates and the endless talk which have smothered its power to transact business ; but, after all is said and done, and whatever measures of repression or of delegation may be adopted, the House of Commons must remain the talking shop for the grievances and for the views of this great democracy. Political logic is as merciless as political economy, and will assert herself with equal and reiterated force. If we turn our eyes, not only to the oligarchies of ancient history, but to the democratic governments of the present, we are confronted by the inevitable fact that, while the Lower House is the House of Talk, the Second Chamber is the House for Business. In France and America it is to the Senate that public attention is directed, and it is in our responsible colonies upon the Legislative Councils that the chief burden of legislative work devolves. In England, which is equally a democracy, we have neither a written constitution with a Supreme Court, as in America, nor, as in any of the modern democracies, the executive assistance of a powerful Second Chamber. At present we are without the known political apparatus that makes democratic government possible in other countries. The House of Lords is a survival—an admirable and most distinguished survival, I admit—of another political system, and so it comes about that while the House of Commons labours with that same disease of talk that belongs to all popular assemblies in every constitutional country, it remains the one supreme political authority, and therefore the centre of all political interest. The House of Commons is helpless. No rules of procedure or penal measures can do more than mitigate a nuisance which cannot be cured. On the other hand, the House of Commons is a safety-valve ; you cannot gag the freedom of debate there without imperilling constitutional government, and tending to throw the discussion of all public

questions still more into the vortex and passion of public meetings. Government by mass meetings is the alternative to Government embarrassed but never defeated by superabundant talk within the House of Commons. No measure upon which the country has set its heart can be talked out ; crotchetts and fads are every day, and without much regret ; while of other measures, with useful but not pressing objects, it is the quality and not the quantity of legislation that tells in the long run.

Again, the sole interest in Parliament is not the passing of Bills. The time spent in debates that do not bear immediate fruit is not necessarily wasted or unimportant. Its debates denote the development of public questions in the minds of public men, and predict to the student of those forces which make history the bent of future events. We do not want the County Council to play at politics and to plagiarise the habits, for which they have no excuse, of the House of Commons. For the County Councils to become mere debating societies, which is what they will, if they neglect their proper business and discuss political subjects, would throw upon them deserved ridicule. The constituencies are not in these days disposed to submit to dictation in the selection of their candidates for Parliamentary honours. Party managers know too well the fiasco that is certain to attend any attempt to impose upon a constituency the incapable nominee of any great man, or even of any great party. There is not the slightest danger with these single-handed constituencies of local feeling and wishes suffering. On the other hand, with the divisions of great county constituencies into Parliamentary districts, and of the great boroughs into Parliamentary wards, it is exceedingly difficult for any man, however great or even conspicuous his ability may be, to find a seat, unless he has strong local influence to back him up. Up to the last Redistribution Bill, it was not unusual for members of Parliament to represent constituencies to whose local interests and local feeling they were complete strangers. All that is changed now ; and the present member of Parliament, upon social questions and other matters outside the regular planks of the party platform, is intimately in touch with his constituents. There does not therefore exist, as there did previously, the same excuse for having in the local Councils, local politicians. I should also regret if it became a general practice for the aspirant for Parliamentary honours to serve his apprenticeship as a

politician in his County Council. There is a great difference between a man like Mr. Chamberlain, bringing the successful administration of a great city and its experiences to strengthen his political position in the House of Commons, and the manipulation of the notoriety and opportunities of his position by a County Councillor of ordinary intelligence to seize the control of the party machinery in his own district. Birmingham was large enough to admit of learning large experience upon local and social reforms; but if every County Council is to become the cock-pit of provincial politics, it is not likely to produce politicians of much breadth or sagacity.

It must also be borne in mind that the habits of those who are specially qualified to transact local affairs are seriously detrimental to the work of Parliament. Local affairs can only be efficiently managed by those who can give to them a detailed and therefore a constant attention. As it is, in many of the large and straggling counties the business will lapse into the hands of those who live near the county town. For example, to take the case of Devonshire, it will be a very great tax, both in time and money, for a tenant farmer or any professional man who may be elected as a Councillor for one of the remoter districts to have to attend at Exeter. It is more obvious that it would be impossible for a member of Parliament to attend to his duties at Westminster and to take any efficient part in the local administration of any but the home counties, which are within easy railway distance of London. Parliament is every year absorbing more time and obliging its members to live within easy distance of London. The great representatives of commerce and of trade who are proud to assist the deliberations of the House of Commons, have, as it is, a very severe strain imposed upon them. They find it very inconvenient to be so closely tied to Westminster; but London is, after all, the easiest place to get to and from, and the work of the House of Commons is the business of the nation, and it is their business and concern to protect the great interests in which they are engaged. These men—the cream of the middle-class—would not be likely to find admittance to the House of Commons if it involved the ordeal of contesting on purely party grounds a position in the County Councils; nor, as I have implied earlier, would such a preparatory school of politics raise the political level of the House of Commons. The old party lines are exhausted. Such cries as "Peace, retrenchment, and reform" are mere empty

phrases, the emptiest echoes of the sound and fury of far-off and far-gone electioneering days. We stand, as it were, on the eve of a new chapter in parties as well as in principles. The old, easy-going and easily defined paths for public men no longer exist. In the old days our politics were ready-made for us, and we slipped without any trouble or difficulty into the political connection that had been favoured by our ancestors. Every man has now to think and act for himself.

With democracy enthroned, every political party is equally keen to satisfy the movement of the time ; and, with this great popular power controlling this vast Empire, every question assumes great proportions and demands large breadth of treatment. What is called the Cobden School is at an end. It belonged to the era of middle-class supremacy, and it has died —I will not say of inanition, but of that inevitable supersession that followed a democratic suffrage.

Among the problems of the future nothing has aroused more vividly the interest and imagination of the people than the growth of that Empire of which they are now the controllers.

Despite the gloomy prophecies of many political writers, no evidence is more remarkable and more convincing of the imperial instinct of the race than the concern of the people, now that they feel they have a handling of it, in the great national inheritance.

Both sides in politics have found that an appeal to the pride of the English people in the English Empire is a winning card. This has not always been so. Up to within a very recent date the most advanced politicians, those who assume to represent the purely democratic spirit of the largest numbers, treated the idea of empire as an aristocratic heresy. The British Empire, India, and the Colonies were looked upon with the deepest suspicion, not as the opportunities of blessing and benefit to the people, but as bloodstained inheritances that were maintained in the interest of the governing classes. Such ideas no longer appeal to the working classes. The imagination and spirit of the democracy has been touched with a national feeling that seemed a few years ago to find a very feeble echo. Is it not of immense importance that those who represent the people in Parliament should not fail just where their constituents desire strength ? It would indeed be a sorry state of things if members of Parliament should lack that grasp of the imperial idea which is the true instinct of the people. This is an evil against which we

should jealously guard. The University representatives are not elected by the men who are the life of the University ; they are really the nominees of the county clergy, and are selected upon considerations that do not much differ from those that govern the choice of other constituencies, and so it comes about that you cannot find any entrance to the House of Commons except through local connection. Under the old system rotten boroughs afforded a means for the introduction of poor men of genius to public life : under our present system, when the instinct of the people is sound, and when the duties of the House of Commons amount to the government of the Empire, we should do nothing to increase the risk of parochial politicians becoming the dominant type.

We may abuse Party government, but it is inevitable, and in spite of everything, does afford the best known security for public liberty. It has good qualities. Let us try and promote them. It has also petty and debased purposes. These would infallibly become accentuated and supreme if the politician is to measure and colour his vision of public questions and of political conduct from the standpoint of the local wire-pullers in political County Councils. I am afraid that among a very large class, whom the public interest would desire to attract to political work, the name of politician is already a name of opprobrium.

I do not wish to see an infallible receipt for increasing the spurious article, and I hope therefore, in order that we may continue to have in the House of Commons English gentlemen, whether they work with their hands or their heads, that they will be selected from the direct approval of the people as fitting members of an assembly whose business is of great matters, and not in connection with any perverted use of local administration.

There are other considerations which should make us pause before we infect our County Councils with the virulence of party politics. I have touched upon the great question of the Empire ; let me refer, in connection with Local Government, to another centre of activity—I mean that group of social problems for which impatient remedies are being carelessly suggested by headstrong and wrong-headed people. They lie outside the sphere of party politics, and are likely to suffer just in proportion as they are prejudiced by becoming identified with political rivalry. The Housing of the Poor, any extension and development of Secondary Education, the disposal and control of many ancient, and the disposition of future, endowments for local and

benevolent purposes—these are all of them matters which, if local administration obtains confidence and respect, could be dealt with better and more reasonably through its instrumentality than in any other way. To refer to the case of London. Here you have intensified and concentrated all the leading problems of the present. The instruments to deal with them are close at hand. London possesses the finest material, the largest and ablest leisured class of any city in the world, from which to select men and women capable of dignifying and raising the whole character of local work. Local self-government has been despised and rejected because it has, whether justly or not, become identified with the performance by men of average dulness of duties unusually commonplace. As in New York a very large class of the ablest men decline with disgust to touch the administration of their city, bedraggled and degraded as it has been by party competition and electioneering wire-pullers, so in London there is a large class who are standing aside, waiting with distrustful expectation to see whether the County Council is to attract the respect and confidence of Londoners at large.

I do not defend that fastidious spirit that declines to move its little finger to help the cause of honest administration. It is cowardly and foolish, because, if the right men abdicate their opportunities, others will not fail to abuse them. However, we must admit facts, and some of the best men do want to be reassured. The new Councils should therefore act with pre-eminent circumspection, and those who have the power should carefully refrain from throwing difficult subjects at the heads of inexperienced bodies that have not yet had time to master their specific duties. If they do the latter creditably they will not wait long to obtain others. It is the start that is all-important. Do not let us embark upon wrong principles, which will drive the best men out of the running, and infallibly discredit the uses of local administration. The men wanted are neither the seekers after notoriety nor sucking politicians. To make our Local Government a success, and not a reproach, a vindication of popular administration, and not a confession of its incapacity, we must not listen to the siren voices of those politicians who, to give more excitement to the County Councils, would make them a babel of fruitless talk and confused purposes.

LYMINGTON.

Comedy of a Country House.

BY JULIAN STURGIS.

AUTHOR OF "THRALDOM," "JOHN MAIDMENT," ETC.

CHAPTER IX.

"Do you know," said Dora to Archie on the next morning, "that I quite like your friend Mrs. Chauncey?"

"Eh? What?" said Archie absently. He was standing with one foot on the fender opening the morning's letters, pocketing some with a rueful look, and throwing others into the fire with manifest relief. Dora was standing near. These two were alone in the dining-room before breakfast. It was natural enough that they should be the first to come downstairs in the morning, to begin as it were the life of the day. They both had a happy morning look.

"I was saying," said Dora emphatically, "that I quite like your friend Mrs. Chauncey."

"My friend?" asked Archie, throwing the last letters into the fire, and pressing them down with the poker. "I didn't know she existed till I found her here. Who is she?"

Dora laughed. "It's too funny of you," she said, "to know nothing of your own guests. Have you no curiosity?"

"Lots," he answered; "but somehow I haven't thought of Mrs. Chauncey. Who is she?"

"Wife of Mr. Chauncey," said Dora drily.

"She's not a widow then? I took her for a little quiet sort of widow."

"Quiet!" repeated Dora, with a slight peculiar emphasis.

"She seems to me to make eyes rather," remarked Archie sagely. "Doesn't she?"

"No; there you wrong her," said Dora; "she has the sort

of eyes that make themselves—men can't discriminate in these things. Of course she knows that her eyes are effective."

"Well? What's the matter with her anyway?" asked Archie.

"Nothing that I know of," said Dora; "but of course one can't have been about in London for the last two years, as I have, without hearing stories."

"Oh, never listen to stories," said Archie, bluntly.

"That's what I mean," said Dora. "I like her much better than I thought I should. I always do find people, when I come to know them, a great deal better than people say."

"You are quite right there," said Archie, cordially. "People never are half so bad as they are said to be. As for Mrs. Chauncey, she is a little mousie kind of woman; there's no harm in her."

Dora pursed her lips; she felt that it was absurd of Archie to think that he knew. "Anyway," she said, "I choose to like her. She came and talked to me last night after dinner, before you men came in; she quite touched me. She didn't complain; but I am quite sure that her husband is a horrid drinking, gambling sort of man."

"Oh, you haven't come to know Chauncey," said Archie, smiling: "when you do come to know Chauncey, perhaps you will find him too a great deal better than people say. You always do, you know."

"Never," said Dora; "I detest Chauncey, and I hope I shall never set eyes on him."

"That's not fair," said Archie.

"I don't care, and I wish you would not argue before breakfast," said Dora."

"Are you hungry?" asked Archie; "let's ring and have up breakfast; I suppose I may?"

She laughed for answer, and he rang the bell.

While she was being discussed in the dining-room, Mrs. Chauncey in the privacy of her own apartment was putting careful finishing touches to her appearance. That clear pallor, which she accepted from Nature, required nevertheless some skilful management; and about the expressive eyes there was delicate work to be done, that they might be the more expressive. She had too a reputation for wearing clothes well, and this reputation makes necessary many careful looks and artful touches. All had not gone quite well that morning, and Clara's docile middle-aged maid was pink about the eyes and sniffed

occasionally as if oppressed by unshed tears. Clara was thinking of Dora. She was well aware that she had advanced in her favour on the previous evening. She congratulated herself on this gain. She was able even to feel a little virtuous for having been so nice to a woman, whom she cordially disliked ; and yet at bottom she knew well that she only cared to win Mrs. Rutherford's confidence that she might have a better chance of hurting her. She was surprised by the liveliness of her own aversion. Dora's happiness affronted her. Her careless glance seemed to tell her that she was a faded woman, and unimportant. She longed to make this brilliant young creature in all her insolence of freshness and youth feel that she too was somebody. Besides, she had another cause of dislike, of which Dora was entirely ignorant. She had met Tom Rutherford some years before his marriage, and had practised on him her artless fascinations ; and of these fascinations Mr. Rutherford had remained unconscious to this day, as unconscious as his wife. And now these Rutherfords exasperated her, and stung her where she was most tender. The man was a rising man, whose career was full of interest ; and she thought of her husband drifting about on the Mediterranean, and in doubtful company. The woman had been welcomed with delight into that particular circle of society to which Clara in more sanguine days had determined to belong. Political and social success seemed to her jealous eyes to be made flesh in these Rutherfords. She had formed no plan for injuring Dora. She was of that modern school of diplomatists, who achieve their ends by refusing to look beyond the next step. For Clara the next step was to win Dora's confidence ; on this she concentrated all her powers. She refused to consider what the next step would be ; she did not even confess to herself that it would be necessarily injurious to Dora ; she was able, as has been said, to feel that it did her some credit to be agreeable to a woman, whom she disliked so bitterly. And yet she knew in her heart that her purpose was to do Dora Rutherford as bad a turn as might be.

In the comedy, which was being played in the house, Mrs. Chauncey was determined to take no part ; for consideration had only strengthened her first impression, and she saw clearly that it would be folly in her to run the risk of being condemned by Mrs. Dormer and Lady Jane Lock, that she might help to save one young man from matrimony and another from losing his good quarters. Leonard Vale, though he was an old friend,

must take care of himself ; she would take no part in that contest. But now she had a little game of her own to play ; she would go on step by step ; her life had become suddenly more interesting. She smiled at herself in the glass, a timid sad sweet smile, and noted its effect ; and then with the smile on her lips, she went lightly down the stairs, leaving her maid behind her, now sniffling with greater freedom, and dropping by mischance a large tear on the gown, which had failed to give satisfaction.

Dora Rutherford looked up from her breakfast as each man entered the room, and noticed certain trifles at a glance which would have escaped a duller eye. She decided from their clothes that no form of sport was purposed on that day ; and she knew the full importance of this fact. She was well aware that in a country-house party, where no definite occupation is provided, the danger of matrimony is at least doubled. There had been a day's hunting, but it had been an easy sociable day, and the young lady had joined in the chase ; and now it seemed as if day after day there was to be nothing to do. If it be true that Hymen finds some mischief for idle hearts to do, here was too fair a field. If this had been a shooting party, Dora knew, though she had seen so little of the world, that competition would be for something other than the smiles of women and jealousy caused by something other than a girl's kindness. She had seen men silent and moody, when they were expected to be attentive, for reasons which seemed to her to show the unreasonableness of men ; they had not shot up to their form forsooth, or more pheasants had gone over somebody else. But this party was of the most perilous kind. Not only was it full of daily dangers, and each hour given up to both the sexes ; but it seemed also to have no necessary end. Dora without direct enquiry had discovered that no one of the guests had been asked for a definite period. Not one had been asked from a Tuesday to a Saturday ; nor was a word said by any one of them, which tended to show that he or she was on a round of visits. Such a party seemed to Dora as if, like a novel, it could only end in an engagement. She saw all the danger ; but the keener her perception of the danger, the more gallant arose her spirit. Noting the signs of this perilous idleness in the men, she only felt the joy of battle. "What are you going to do to-day ?" she asked Archie, as if she had no care but to end one of those periods of silence, which are too common at the breakfast-table.

"Nothing," he answered pleasantly, "unless you can suggest something."

"How is it that you are not shooting at all?" she asked again.

"My keeper won't let me," he said.

She laughed and looked about her.

"He doesn't mean me," said Sir Villiers drily, as her eye met his; "he refers to the gamekeeper."

"A most alarming man," said Archie, "from Yorkshire, of few words but very emphatic. He has decreed that we are not to shoot this week."

"But why?" asked Dora.

"I didn't dare to ask," answered Archie; "I suppose the pheasants prefer it. They might give us a chance, or me at least. I never had much shooting, as you know."

"Good old Archie!" said Tony Fotheringham kindly, and he added thoughtfully: "All that business with the rifle in America will have made you more out of it still."

"It's very hard on Mr. Tony, isn't it?" said Dora to Archie.

"Oh, never mind me," said Tony.

"Oh, but I am sure it is so bad for you," she said; "I am sure you need a great deal of air and exercise."

"Do you think so too?" he asked with a sudden accession of gravity. He looked earnestly from Mrs. Rutherford to his well-filled plate. "That's what my doctor says," he added.

"Your doctor!" said Dora; "have you got a doctor?" Looking at the smooth rosy face before her she could not help laughing.

"You bet I have," said Tony gravely. "I go to Moody."

"Dr. Moody is a very clever man," said Mrs. Dormer, who had become deeply interested at the moment when the conversation touched health; "he was my doctor once—no, not my last doctor; he was the last but two; I can't remember why I left him; I know he is extremely clever."

"He is extremely clever," said Sir Villiers Hickory; "he has made a large fortune by telling people not to over-eat themselves; that's clever."

"It's most important," said Mrs. Dormer.

"Well, I am all for shooting," said Dora; "I am sure that Mr. Tony's health requires it."

"Then you must ask the keeper," said Archie laughing.

"Well," said Mrs. Dormer, who thought it time to put a

gentle end to this plan, "I am sure that I for one am glad that there is to be no shooting this week. One either doesn't see a man all day, or else one has to stand outside a damp clump with poor little rabbits bolting under one's petticoats and great pheasants falling on one's hat, and explosions going on ; and one lunches in a draughty place with guns in all the corners, and a horrid man on each side of you with pockets full of cartridges."

This expression of Mrs. Dormer's views ended the discussion. Dora discreetly said no more ; and Mrs. Dormer did not think it necessary to add that the keeper's decision about the shooting had been made after her last friendly visit to the keeper's wife. The Yorkshire keeper had married a little woman, who had been born and bred in a southern county ; and, if he were inclined to issue orders to the rest of the world, she was able for the most part to provide him with directions. She and Mrs. Dormer were very old friends, and, if they agreed that not a gun should be fired, the interests of neither owner, keeper nor pheasants were of much weight in comparison.

CHAPTER X.

Soon after breakfast Dora was standing on the terrace, and looking over the fine expanse of park. It was a broad terrace, stretched in front of the long Italian wing, which was the most modern part of the Castle ; and from this raised plateau she looked far away over land, which looked as if every clump of trees, almost every tree, had been planted to make the best possible effect, and as if the land itself had been curved and hollowed in strict agreement with some pedant's rules of beauty.

Since there was to be no shooting, Dora had asserted promptly that, when she was in the country, she liked to be out of doors all day long, and had asked Archie to show her the place ; and she now waited for him with some impatience. After a few minutes he came ; and she saw that a small company was coming with him. There was Leonard Vale, and Tony Fotheringham, and Mrs. Chauncey, and finally Elizabeth Lock. Miss Lock had said that she had letters to write, but her mother had said "Nonsense !" and had added that a walk

was just what she wanted. As they came towards her, Dora again said to herself that this was a sulky girl.

"I wondered if I might come too," said Clara Chauncey, as if she looked to Dora Rutherford for permission."

"Of course you may," said Dora pleasantly; "that is, you have as much right anywhere as I have—or more, for you didn't invite yourself." Then she took possession of Archie, giving a little shake to his arm. "Now, Archie," she said, "you are to tell us all about it—the house and the park and everything."

"All I know," said Archie blandly; he too stood and looked across this well-kept park. "It must be rather jolly in summer," he said; "it looks as if it had been all done with a spade and a foot-rule, and yet I saw a bit of land high up in the Rocky Mountains which looked like this, though of course it was just as Nature placed the grass and trees. I suppose this has been pretty well groomed though."

"And the house?" asked Dora, giving his arm a little pull that he might be brought to regard his stately dwelling-place. "I know this part; this is the newest; but which is the oldest?"

"How should I know?" asked Archie.

"You are bound to," she answered.

"But I give you my word I don't," he said; "it all looks to me old enough. That's the good of this old English climate of ours. Now I dare say this place was built at a dozen different times, and of different stone too; and then comes our rare old climate and damps and stains, and sets the ivy growing and sticks on the lichen, and there you are—it looks as if it had grown!" He regarded his castle with a dawning affection.

"But you ought to know more about it," said Dora, as they began to move.

"I think that I know something about it," said Clara Chauncey modestly, "if I may venture to instruct its owner. I have been reading about it in the county book. The tower is the oldest part."

They had come down from the terrace, and they now stopped again and looked at the tower, which was connected by a short wing with the rest of the building.

"How old?" asked Dora.

"Well," said Clara, "it has been much restored, but they say

in the book that some of this tower is so old that nobody knows to what period it belongs ; they talk about ancient Romans and people of that kind ; and the walls are tremendously thick ; and there is a staircase in one of them."

" Oh ! " cried Dora delighted, " a secret staircase ! "

" Yes," said Clara ; " and in behind that shrubbery must be the door. Isn't it, Mr. Vale ? "

They all looked at Leonard Vale, who had not spoken. He had been looking very cross, but at this appeal to him he smiled on all the party. " I'm afraid I don't know much about it," he said.

" But of course—I never thought of it," said Archie—" of course the upper end of the staircase must come out in your rooms. You ought to see Lenny's rooms," he said to the others ; " he has such good taste ; he has made them charming."

" They are on view at any time," said Leonard, beginning to move away.

" But does the secret staircase really come out in your rooms ? " asked Clara Chauncey with her innocent air of curiosity.

" I never looked," he said shortly.

" It is really so interesting in the book," she said to the others ; " all sorts of people have escaped down it—fugitive priests and cavaliers, and a lady eloping, and—oh, it's really most interesting."

By this time they had passed the other wing and turned the corner of the house.

" This is the side which I like best," said Archie ; " it doesn't look so much as if a hundred gardeners had been at work on it a hundred years."

They stopped again and looked. Luckily for them it was one of the soft days of November. There was a feeling of moisture and fertility in the air, a gentle wind and a cloudy sky. Under the influences of the day the landscape had a look of gentle melancholy, and of promise too ; one seemed to feel the secret work of Nature in the ground, and to anticipate the far-off spring. On this side of the Castle there was no terrace nor formal flower-beds. The park began at the wall and sloped downwards, with no great steepness, but showing a more broken surface everywhere, until it ended in a line of willows, which marked the little brook in the bottom. Beyond the brook the land rose with less steepness, but that more gentle

slope was covered with all which the improvements of many owners had left of an ancient wood. There were trim coverts in many parts of the property, which were better adapted for sporting purposes ; but this old bit of woodland pleased the new Lord the best.

They descended into the dell.

" May we go over ? " asked Dora with her foot on the end of a tree-trunk, which lay across the little stream.

" If you ain't afraid," said Archie.

" Afraid of what ? " she asked. " Of your awful keeper, or of a log of wood, or what ? Don't you know that I am afraid of nothing."

" Ah, how I envy you ! " said Clara Chauncey, with a devout look in the expressive eyes. " I am afraid of everything. To look at that log gives me a vertigo."

" Then look at me ! " said Dora, and she ran along the trunk as safely as a squirrel. " I must go up into the wood," she said from beyond the brook ; " it smells so good."

" Stick to the path," said Archie ; " and I hope you won't be seized as a poacher. There's a better bridge higher up, and we'll join you."

Dora had begun already to mount the path which led up through the wood. It was a rough track, half-choked with dead leaves and squelchy, as Dora described it to herself, under foot. She had not gone far when she was aware of some one following her, and turning saw Leonard Vale. " Oh, you came over too," she said.

This is one of those remarks on which comment is superfluous. Lenny, who had not put on boots fit for the country, had been picking his way behind her in a rather comical fashion ; but, when she turned, he came to her more quickly. " I hope you don't mind," he said.

" Mind ? Why should I ? " she asked. " Only," she added, " isn't it rather rash for us both to leave them ? "

" That's all right for a few minutes," he said ; " Tony and Mrs. Chauncey are there, and they are all together. It's only for a few minutes, and a few minutes are so much to me."

She looked at him quickly and began to walk on again.

" I am always so awfully afraid of offending you," he said. " If I were to say half of what I feel about you and your friendship, you would laugh at me."

" No," said Dora ; " I told you I liked to make friends. I

have always said that it is all nonsense to say that men and women can't be friends."

"And you will be my friend?" he said.

"Yes, yes," she answered; "I told you so."

They walked on together for a time in silence.

"I wonder," he began presently, "if I am enough of a friend to say something." He paused as if for permission.

"How can I tell," she asked, "till you say it?"

He smiled to show his admiration of her readiness. "I can't help thinking," he said, "of something which you said yesterday. I want so much to tell you that I understand and sympathise; and then I think that it is impossible that you should care whether I care or not. I am disheartened when I think of you and of myself."

"What was it I said?"

"It was about your husband, and his not consulting you, and —"

She stopped him with her laughter.

"I don't wonder that you laugh at me," he said. "It didn't seem a laughing matter to me."

"At least it is not tragical," she said; "it does not do, I can assure you, to look at these things tragically. One can't expect to be understood by one's husband."

He sighed, as he walked beside her. "Of course," he said after a time, "you are right, as you always are. It is brave of you to feel that—and wise too, I suppose. But after all it does seem tragic enough to me. You'll laugh at me of course, but I can't help thinking of something, which I read somewhere, about an Indian throwing away a pearl richer than all his tribe."

Dora laughed, but not quite naturally. "Alas poor Indian!" she said lightly; "after all it was better than hanging it in his nose."

Leonard sighed instead of laughing. "How can one help cursing fate," he said suddenly and almost angrily, "when one sees a man who has got the best thing in the world and doesn't half value it, and when one knows that to another it would be light and life and everything—of course you laugh; I know I am a fool; but I can't help it."

Dora was not at all inclined to laugh. She was uncomfortable, but interested. She had had no intention of discussing her husband with another man; and yet she had slipped into a half-veiled criticism of her husband. She felt that she was

wrong ; and yet she was interested. There was a relief in allowing the grievance of her life, which she had so long kept close, to emerge a little into the light, not so far but that she could clap it under lock and key again in a moment. And then this young man, this friend, was so tactful and so careful of her feelings, that she could venture to discuss with him a matter, which she would discuss with nobody else ; and moreover, and it was this which made her most bold, she was certain of her power over him, certain that she could stop him in a moment, if he said or even looked too much. Her power over the young man made her bold, and it pleased her, too, and flattered her. She suspected that many women had flattered him ; and he flattered her. Other women had admired his looks ; she knew that she did not care at all for his regular features and languid grace. This spoiled young man came humbly to her for advice and assistance ; and this pleased her very much indeed. But, although she was pleased, she was uncomfortable too. She felt a quality in his adoration which made her uneasy. She realized that it was time to use her power over him, and to stop him now. "Is it far to the top of the wood ?" she asked.

He did not know ; and Dora, who having once begun to ascend a thing could not be happy till she had reached the top, and seen what was beyond, begun to hurry up the path. And so they came to the upper boundary of the wood, and found a country road beyond which was rough open common.

No sooner had Dora seen this than she turned and hurried down again. "We have left them too long," she said.

He smiled as he followed her ; it gave him exquisite pleasure to hear her speak as if he and she were partners in a plot. This pleased him so much, that he almost forgot to care whether Lord Lorrilaire married or no, or only cared because the decision of his cousin's fate would put a stop to this delightful partnership. He was wise enough to say no more at this time about himself or about her. As they went quickly down through the wood, he only made a few remarks about Archie, speaking to her as to a superior officer, who kindly allowed him an inkling of her plans. Her uneasiness vanished ; her spirits rose ; she hurried downward over the fallen leaves to rescue that other young man, who might be running into danger.

It seemed as if this safe protector of young men was not a moment too soon. When Dora and Leonard Vale had dis-

appeared in the wood, the rest of the party had walked along the bank of the little stream. When they had reached the little rustic bridge, Mrs. Chauncey had declared that it looked no safer than the log below, and had invited Tony Fotheringham to walk further up the stream with her. So Archie and Elizabeth had crossed with no other companions and had walked slowly back to where the little track ran up into the wood. There they had waited for Dora's return ; and presently, since she did not come, Elizabeth had suggested that they should return to the house. She would not go back to the bridge again ; she chose to walk the tree-trunk, as Mrs. Rutherford had done. So she had stepped boldly on to the log and walked half-way across, and there had been seized with a sudden panic, had stood still, shut her eyes and, before Archie had seen that anything was the matter, she had slipped from the uncertain bridge and splashed in the stream.

When Dora emerged, keen-eyed and anxious, from the wood, the sight which she saw was this. On the top of the opposite bank was Archie, wet almost to the shoulders. He had just scrambled up, and was now helping Miss Lock to climb out of the water. The girl's hat was floating down the brook, and a great strand of her splendid hair was hanging loose. When Archie had brought her safe to the top of the bank she covered her face with both her hands and seemed to sway, and would have fallen perhaps, had not Archie held her in his arms. This was the sight which Dora saw ; this was the sight which lent her wings. She darted along the log, and, as she gained the farther side, uttered a shrill cry and fell.

At the sound of Dora's cry Elizabeth awoke to her position ; with one hand she pushed back her fallen hair, and with the other pushed her supporter almost angrily away. Archie, seeing in a moment that Elizabeth could stand alone, left her and ran to Dora. Almost at the same moment Leonard Vale, who had stood speechless and sick with fear, appeared at her other side ; he seemed to have lost control of himself ; he sank down beside her babbling and trembling. "Oh, oh !" he gasped, "she'll die—she'll die, I tell you ! Oh, oh, she'll die !" Archie looked quickly at him with surprise, annoyance, a new dislike. He stooped and lifted Dora from the ground, and by the same movement drew her away from the youth who was grovelling at her side.

As she felt herself raised from the earth Dora opened her eyes and saw that it was Archie, as she hoped, who had raised her.

"Thank you," she said feebly, but holding his arm most tightly ; "it's better now."

"What's better ?" he asked.

"My ankle. You must help me to the house. Oh, thank you, Archie ; how good you are !"

She turned her face from his to smile upon Elizabeth, who now drew near to offer aid. "I will take an arm of each of you," she said ; and, so supported, she limped up to the house.

CHAPTER XI.

On the next morning there was sound of determined knocking at a door in the tower wing. Tony Fotheringham was there, grave and business-like, arrayed for the chase. He listened, but could hear no sound ; and so, after a fit interval, he opened the door and went in.

The room, which he entered, was the middle one of the three, which Leonard Vale had rescued from disused targets, broken bird-cages, and all the strange worthless lumber which a great house must push into some corner. This had been no incomplete conversion. Chairs of divers shapes, each an experiment in comfort, filled much of the floor, and small tables were so placed among them that the most lazy of loungers need move nothing but an arm, and that not far, to the desired tumbler or box of cigarettes. It was, in short, the most luxurious of smoking-rooms ; but on the mantelpiece, instead of pipes or tobacco-jars, were bits of fine china, and here and there against the wall stood a piece of valuable old furniture. Opposite to the door was a large window ; and in the thickness of the wall a deep window-seat had been made, that the amateur might recline at ease and please his eye with easy seeing of one of the finest views which Langley Castle could give. Leonard Vale had a pretty taste. The smaller room on the right of this was more distinctly a cabinet of curiosities ; and in his bedroom on the left, which was under the empty open apartment at the top of the tower, such commonplace things as a young man's washing-stand and chest of drawers were each a bit of cabinet-work which challenged the attention of the earnest enquirer, and made simple folk wonder where the bason could be.

Tony was in no mood to linger over works of art. He walked across the sitting-room and knocked again upon the door of the

bedroom. This time a sound of some sort was heard, and, after waiting for a minute to consider its meaning, Tony opened the door and entered. A silken *portière* opened with the door, and, by the light thus admitted from the outer room, the visitor was able to see the bed, at the foot of which hung a piece of needle-work, worked in a harem, sold in the bazaar of Smyrna, and now protecting by day the couch of Mr. Leonard Vale.

Leonard was awake. Without moving his head on the pillow he turned a lack-lustre but hostile eye on the intruder ; he said nothing.

"Oh ! old chap, I say !" said good Mr. Fotheringham, for the sight grieved him. "It is so awfully bad for you, you know," he added sadly. As Mr. Vale made no comment on this speech, Tony spoke again. "I said I'd come and look you up," he said. "You ought to have breakfasted, you know ; the trap is just coming round, and Archie told me to remind you that a horse had gone on for you."

"I wish you had gone on !" said Leonard malevolently. "Ring, will you ?"

"What for ?" asked Tony suspiciously.

Leonard growled. His friend regarded him sadly. He sighed and shook his round head before he spoke again.

"I say, Lenny, old chap, I do wish you wouldn't go on like this. You go too fast, you know ; you can't last."

"Who wants to last ?" cried out Lenny with sudden liveliness and a more audible malediction. "Do you think I want to save myself up like a pound in an old woman's stocking ? Will you ring that bell ?"

"You drink too much and you smoke too much. My doctor ——"

"Hang your doctor !"

"Oh, no, I say, don't say that. He is a tremendously clever chap, and he knows."

"Oh, go to ——"

"No, I shan't. I shall tell you what my doctor says. He says you ought not to smoke more than two cigars a day, or their equivalent in cigarettes." The word "equivalent" was invested with an extraordinary solemnity by Mr. Fotheringham. He paused that his friend might have time to digest this golden rule, and then said, "You know, old man, there's nothing more important than health. Do you know my exercise ?"

As no answer was returned, Tony gravely inclined his body forward from the hips, and with his shoulders forced backwards to an unnatural extent, uttered in a deep tone the words "Ninety-nine!"

Leonard Vale looked at him with amazement and anger.

"Ninety-nine, ninety-nine, ninety-nine," said Tony Fotheringham, absorbed by this enchanting occupation.

"Great Scot!" said Leonard, when at last the other paused, and looked at him with beaming face, expecting sympathy. "By George, you are a fool!"

"Good old Lenny!" said Tony amiably in answer. "But really and truly, if you will do that exercise for an hour a day, you will be a different man. And as to drink, my doctor says —"

"Confound you! Will you ring that bell?" cried Leonard.

Mr. Fotheringham rang the bell with a protesting air; and with the same air he heard Mr. Vale's man ordered to prepare the usual pick-me-up. When Leonard had swallowed this dram, he felt more equal to the duties of the day, and listened, while Tony told him again that they were just going to start, and that among the horses, which had been sent on, was one for him.

"Am I fit to go hunting?" asked Leonard plaintively. He put his arm out of bed and held it up and watched it tremble.

"It would do you good, old chap," cried Tony heartily.

"It's a funkiny day with me," said Leonard; "my nerves are all over the place; I couldn't sit on for shaking."

"Well, are you coming?" asked Tony; "we can't wait. Archie told me to remind you, if you weren't ready, that you could order the dog-cart, and come after us and take your chance."

"Who's going?" asked Leonard.

"Well, there's me, and Archie, and good old Hickory and Mrs. Rutherford."

Leonard Vale threw off the clothes and brought his feet to the floor. "Oh, I am bad," he said miserably, as he sat on the bed—"I can't go; it's no good; it's just my vile luck." He turned into bed again, stretched down a long left arm to pull up the bed-clothes, and lay with his face to the wall.

Tony waited a moment, regarding his prostrate friend with a pathetic expression on his rosy face.

"Oh, do get out, can't you?" growled the friend; and Tony went.

Tony, descending sadly from the Tower Wing, found the rest of the party assembled near the fire in the Hall. Had he been quick at perceiving the moods of others, he would have seen that Lady Jane Lock was but little happier than the friend, whom he had left cursing destiny upon his bed. The lady was very stiff in the back and very red in the face, and, do what she could, she could not restrain her tongue entirely from speech. The sight of Mrs. Rutherford descending the majestic staircase, wearing a perfect habit, and moreover displaying on each step the neatest of riding-boots, had filled Lady Jane with a wrath, for which some vent was merely necessary. A sprained ankle on one day, and such a boot on the next! She had tried hard not to speak, but at last she was forced to say something. This something took the form of congratulation. "I cannot help congratulating you," she said, with a sort of strangled laugh, "on your wonderful recovery, or rather on your wonderful ankle."

Dora smiled sweetly upon her, and looked down at her foot with an exasperating approval.

"I should think there never was such a case," continued Lady Jane, who was hurried away by her own words; "a miraculous cure of a sprain—it really ought to go to the medical journals."

"To tell you the truth," said Dora, with enchanting candour, "it was really nothing at all."

"Really?" asked Lady Jane, with concentrated scorn.

"I was more frightened than hurt," said Dora; "and I am so glad it was no worse, for I wouldn't have missed to-day for anything. I do hope that Miss Lock will be all right when we get back."

It was beyond the power of Miss Lock's mother to express gratitude for this kind wish. While Dora, radiant and in closely-fitting boots, was about to start with the men for a day's hunting, poor Elizabeth was in her room, suffering from a chill. Her mother had stood beside her bed, regarding her with the eye of an army doctor who suspects a recruit of shamming. She had rated her for her clumsiness, as if she had fallen from a bridge edged by high parapets for the safety of passers. She had administered a dose, which she had brought many times to the bedside of every one of her daughters; and finally she had stoutly declared that the best remedy for this chill, which ought never to have been taken, was a day's exercise in the open air.

Not a word had Lady Jane Lock said of her objection to girls' hunting ; she was ready to pocket her prejudices for the good of her child ; she was eager to hoist her into the saddle. But Elizabeth would not. She would not hunt—she would not even get up. Is it to be wondered at that Lady Jane was unable to refrain from bitter speech, when she saw Mrs. Rutherford radiant, attractive, admirably equipped for the chase, and thought of her own child, who positively rejected her advice ? "Elizabeth is obstinate as a mule," she had said, not for the first time, to her friend Susan Dormer. "Elizabeth has so much character," she was apt to say confidentially to less intimate acquaintance. Express it as she would, she was well aware that this girl was able to meet her will with a passive opposition which she had not found in any of her elder daughters. She had not encountered this opposition often ; but, when she had encountered it, she had found, as she found on this day, that Elizabeth had her way. This element, so little expected in a daughter of hers, embarrassed Lady Jane more than all the other obstacles which barred her path. She was like a skilful chess-player, who has suddenly found to his amazement that the most important of his pieces may refuse to move. Imagine the attitude of a player, who awakes to the doubt if his queen have not a will of her own ! To such a doubt Lady Jane had been growing more and more alive since the day on which she had presented at Court the youngest and handsomest of her daughters.

The day's hunting was better than the last ; and Dora, happy in the country air and glowing with the ardour of the chase, forgot, save at brief moments, all plots and counterplots, and the important duty of saving the young men, her contemporaries. She enjoyed herself like a child, and could not believe that the sun was not sloping to the west before his time. Archie was not joyous enough to please her ; and she again and again demanded from him more expressions of his happiness. When they were riding homeward together, she attacked him on this subject.

"Why so glum ?" she asked.

He laughed, and denied that he was not jolly.

"You are not half such good company as you used to be," she said.

"Perhaps I'm growing old," said Archie.

As she considered his unusual solemnity, the full perception

of his danger came back to her. She was half inclined to follow up her attack, to put this matter to the touch, to ask him suddenly then and there if he were glum because Elizabeth was not there. The question was on the point of her tongue ; but it came no further. She decided that it would be rash ; she gave full weight to the fact that, in spite of all their old friendship and old interchange of thoughts, he said not a word to her about this girl. She could not believe that he did not think about her, especially since he had pulled her out of the brook, and seen half her hair down ; and yet he did not speak about her. This fact appeared to Dora significant of much ; and she made up her mind not to begin discussion of this perilous subject. She was not too much elated by her little victories ; for she knew full well that, if the mischief were already done, to carry off the young man day after day, was but to feed the flame. The absence, which makes the heart grow fonder, is generally a short absence. So Dora thought and determined to check her natural impetuosity, to be cautious, to say nothing yet about Elizabeth.

"I was thinking of old Palfrey," said Archie presently ; "I was wondering how one entertains a man who is going to be in a Cabinet."

"What? Mr. Palfrey? The great Mr. Palfrey? Is he coming here?"

"We shall find him when we get back," said Archie nodding.

"But who asked him? What's he coming for? Do you know him?"

"No, I don't know him," said Archie ; "how should I? He's to speak at Langstone next week."

"But who asked him to stay with you?"

"Uncle Villiers. Do you object, Dora? Shall I thrust him from my gates?"

Now Dora was busily thinking whether she objected or not, So far as the danger of matrimony was concerned, the infusion of a lively political element was a thing to be welcomed. And yet it vexed her that the friend of her youth, her dear Archie, the potent young Lord Lorrilaire, should be nobody in his own house.

"They say that an Englishman's house is his castle," she said with her chin in the air.

"Well?" asked Archie.

"Your castle seems to be everybody else's house," she said ; "that's all."

He laughed in the best humour. "They take all the trouble," he said.

"And besides," she went on, "you are a Liberal. Why should you entertain one of the rising lights of the other people ?"

"They are much of a muchness," said young Lord Lorrilaire ; "I'd about as soon feed one as the other."

"No, no, no," cried out Dora ; "that's nothing in the world but laziness. I thought you'd say that sort of thing, and it's only laziness ! You ought to take a side. There must be more right on one side than another. You can't not care about politics ; and you are a power in the land ; you must take a side and stick to it."

"Is that necessary, nowadays?" asked Archie laughing ; "I mean the sticking to it ?"

"Of course you can be flippant," said Dora ; "but of course I am right. A man ought not to let other people make him into just what they like."

She said this with decision, and she paused when she had said it, that he might take from it as much profit as he would.

"There's no fear," said Archie after a time ; but she shook her head.

"One can put one's foot down at any time," he said again ; but again she shook her head.

"Well," he said laughing, "let us float a little way ! I assure you, Dora, I don't feel yet as if my life was real. Sometimes all this sort of thing seems a dream ; and sometimes all the old time seems a dream ; but I can never believe in both at once. You must give me time to feel my feet. Feeding Mr. Palfrey for a few days can't make me a Tory, if there are any Tories ; and—"

"And what ?" asked Dora quickly.

If Archie had been on the point of adding a statement even more interesting to the lady, he thought better of it. He laughed instead ; he always found it so easy to laugh, and to laugh is often the least compromising end of a sentence.

"Well, there's the Castle," he said presently, as they came within sight of it ; "is it all real or a dream—all this imposing existence ?"

Dora answered with a little sound of contempt.

"You'll find it real enough," she said, "when you've floated too far to get back."

"One can always get back," he said, laughing again.

CHAPTER XII.

"Feeding Mr. Palfrey for a few days can't make me a Tory," Archie had said; and then he had said "and"; and then he had stopped, adding nothing but laughter. Dora, when she was alone in her room, resting and thinking before the dressing-bell, wondered much what words had nearly followed that suggestive "and." She completed the sentence for her own satisfaction in this way:—"Feeding Mr. Palfrey for a few days can't make me a Tory, and admiring a girl's back hair, also for a few days only, can't make me a husband."

Was this what Archie had so nearly said? If so, why had he stopped? Had chivalry stopped his tongue, or a sudden doubt if he were not really falling in love? She tried to analyse his laughter, which had come in the place of words. Was it mere careless laughter, or was there in it some element of tenderness? Had he laughed as a young man laughs detecting in himself a hidden weakness of love?

Dora recumbent after the fatigues of the hunting day tried to determine the state of her gallant young host; but she failed to satisfy herself. Only of one thing did she grow more sure; the introduction of the political question into Langley Castle was a decided good. Politics, as she told herself, are as good an antidote to love, as shooting is. If the one makes men silent and moody, the other makes them argumentative and garrulous. Both turn the minds of men upon each other and divert them from the dangerous consideration of the other sex. So a young man turns from a lady's eyes to discuss local government, of which he probably knows much less.

Dora felt sure then that she might welcome the advent of Politics and of the Politician. She made up her mind to receive Mr. Palfrey as an ally. For her own sake too she felt a pleasant excitement at his coming. She liked to meet eminent people; this had been among her most favoured dreams in her girlhood's days at the Rectory. To meet eminent people, to feel the currents of political life, to be in and of the movement—these

had been among the visions of the little daughter of the country clergyman. Many of her dreams had come true ; but not the dearest dream of all. Other politicians had listened to her with apparent interest, but not her husband. This, as has been said, was the disappointment of her life. And this disappointment gave a peculiar excitement to each new introduction to an eminent man. She was eager to impress each impressive person ; she felt like an Indian with yet another scalp in prospect ; and her heart fluttered at the hidden thought that, when all men had acknowledged that she was worth hearing, perhaps her husband last of all might awake to the amazing fact that he had not married a fool.

Now it happened that Mrs. Rutherford had never met Mr. Palfrey, or, if she had met him at some large official party, she had not known it. She would not have known him by sight but for the shop-windows. Mr. Palfrey had attained to that stage in the life of the politicians, which is marked by the sudden appearance of his photograph in shop-windows. The actors, whose likenesses adorn the same windows, appear truculent or benevolent, tender or sinister, according to the characters which they represent ; but the statesmen all wear the same expression. Among them the countenance of Mr. Palfrey had lately appeared. Mr. Palfrey was recognised as one of the rising men of his Party.

Dora allowed herself more time than she usually gave to her toilet. When this was well advanced, she sent her maid with kind enquiries about the health of Miss Lock ; and the maid returned with the thanks of the young lady and the news that she was much better, but would not leave her room that evening. This too was satisfactory to Dora. She had no wish that Elizabeth should be ill ; but yet a free evening was something for which to be grateful. Of course, if the girl were really ill, Lord Lorrilaire would feel pity, and, where there is pity, there is danger. But still, as Dora put the last touches to her charming toilet, she felt a sense of freedom, the anticipation of a pleasant evening, of a new success.

As she looked at herself in the big glass, she admitted with her natural frankness that Elizabeth was according to rule a handsomer woman than herself ; but fascination cannot be reduced to rules ; she was content with her appearance. She was altogether sanguine. For that night at least all promised well. With a fine flood of Politics and the girl away, a real

victory might be won, and the rich young Lord swept clear beyond the reach of danger. So down went Dora in her most becoming gown and most agreeable mood.

If Dora had suspected that there was a deliberate purpose of penning Lord Lorrilaire in the Conservative fold, she was sure of it when she entered the drawing-room. She recognised Mr. Palfrey in a moment. He was standing by the fire with his head a little bent and the expression which a prominent politician wears when he is pretending courteously to listen to an outsider, and is thinking of something else. She at once drew his attention to herself, but at the same moment she was aware of the presence of another and an even more remarkable man. She saw Lord Hackbut. Archie had said not a word of the coming of Lord Hackbut; and Dora at once doubted if Archie had known of his coming. It was as likely as not that Sir Villiers had not mentioned it; and yet Dora knew that, if Mr. Palfrey were a sign of an intended capture of Archie, the presence of Lord Hackbut was a sign ten times as serious. Lord Hackbut always meant business.

Lord Hackbut was at least ten years older than the rising Palfrey, and, so far as the public knew, he had not yet begun to rise. Nevertheless he was a man of great strength, both bodily and mental. If the public knew little of him and had never seen his harsh old face grinning from the windows of stationers and fancy repositories, he was well-known to the few who were proud of knowing the inner mechanism of the Conservative Party. With these initiated persons he enjoyed the reputation of having refused all the things which public men as a rule impatiently demand. He was said to have refused the highest places about the Court, many special missions, all sorts of ribands; and many years ago in the days of his youth, to have declined those subordinate offices in Governments, through which the able man rises in due course to a seat in the Cabinet. The decorative side of Public Affairs had never tempted him, nor to be pointed at by the vacillating finger of the man in the street; the magic words, "That's 'im," had never thrilled his soul. It was organisation which attracted him. From the first he had but one great aim in meddling with politics—to be admitted freely behind the scenes, to learn how the puppets are worked, and in due time to work them. He had become the most powerful of party managers. He had assisted in the formation of Cabinets; he had conducted negotiations between

doubtful colleagues. He knew more than any man in England of the strength of the party in this place or that, and how far that strength would be increased or diminished by any given policy. Therefore he was consulted with eagerness both as to measures and men. Before the Caucus had appeared in England, or the American weed in English rivers, Lord Hackbut had been a sort of Caucus in trousers, standing on legs rather bowed and of extraordinary strength, with massive head a little pushed forward, and keen humorous eyes. A nose, which looked as if it had been broken and a front tooth which certainly had been broken, added a certain fierceness to the appearance of this remarkable man.

Lord Hackbut was well aware of the services which he had rendered to his party. He owed them nothing and he held that they owed him much ; but he asked no compensation but the free indulgence of a somewhat sardonic humour. He worked hard for his party and loved to mock the party leaders. It was of course in private life that he thus played the mocker. On the rare occasions, when in his own county he felt bound to speak in public, he would so load his leaders with eulogy so extravagant, that his audience cheered him and them to the echo, while the eminent person, who happened to be present as the representative of the body eulogised, would wear the constrained and rather painful smile of one who suspects irony. Irony is understood by very few Englishmen, and liked by fewer.

So soon as Dora, entering the drawing-room, saw the marked countenance of the great party manager, she knew that a serious effort was about to be made to brand a doubtful sheep with the right party mark. It was a work after Lord Hackbut's heart to secure for his party the influence and wealth of a family which had always been given to that party. Dora was sure that he had learned all about Archie, and that he would lose no time in fixing him, where he should be, at the head of the Conservative Party in the county. She felt indignation for Archie ; but yet she saw, or thought that she saw, more clearly than ever that a definite plot against the young Lord's political preferences made the other plot, which was directed against his heart, more likely to fail.

It was clear that the formidable Lord Hackbut was in the highest spirits. The broken tooth was visible each moment. He took much delight in the society of pretty women : and he had been surprised and pleased at meeting his friend Mrs.

Chauncey in that place. She for her part faced him bravely but warily ; she was a little afraid of the old Lord, and of his piercing eyes and voice. "And where is my friend Jack Chauncey ?" he asked in his clearest tones—"yachting, is he? Yachting! I thought that punting was more in his line." He laughed stridently at his own jest ; and Clara laughed too, though with effort. She was glad of the entrance of Dora, even though she knew with her fatal perception that Lord Hackbut recognised at a glance the appearance of a beauty fresher and more novel than her own. It was always the next thing which this alarming Peer might say, which made people nervous in his society.

Lord Hackbut regarded Mrs. Rutherford with obvious admiration. He took Mrs. Dormer in to dinner, but he found Dora on his right hand and he frankly expressed his pleasure at the arrangement. It was to Dora that he addressed the greater part of his talk, and he was in a very talkative humour. He informed her at the outset that to talk to a pretty woman was always pleasant ; but that to talk to a pretty woman, who occasionally understood what one meant, was one of the rarest pleasures of life. He was outspoken as usual, and amused Dora immensely with his rash speeches.

"I am here," he said, in an interval of his very hearty dinner, "as a hanger-on of the eminent man on the other side of the table. Do you know him? No? You won't hear much from him now. He has a tremendous speech on his chest, which he has got to get off next week at Langstone. Besides, he won't talk before me ; he knows that I know what a humbug he is. Look at him now ! He knows we are talking about him."

"It is you who are talking about him," said Dora.

"So it is," said Lord Hackbut. "I love to talk about him. Look at him ! Now he is trying to look impressive, like an engraving of Pitt ; now he is curtseying and condescending, and pretending to listen. I can tell you that he looks quite different when he's listening to a Whip or to one of his local Three Hundred. He's one of the biggest humbugs in Europe. He tossed up at Oxford to see if he should be Liberal or Tory. It came down tails, and we got him, and much good may he do us. Shall you go and hear him speak ?"

"Of course," said Dora ; "especially now when I know all about him."

"Yes, my dear," said the old Lord, "you come to me when

you want to know about these fellows. It's all a fraud, and we are all in it. Do you believe in popular votes and all that?"

"Yes," said Dora; "I'm a Liberal."

Lord Hackbut laughed aloud; and Palfrey looked across the table with a startled eye and an uneasy smile.

"He believes in all that," said Lord Hackbut, nodding at Mr. Palfrey, "or pretends that he does. It's the biggest humbug in Europe. We wouldn't give any fellows votes if we could help it. Do you mean to tell me that I shouldn't govern my county a blanked sight better than the hat-in-hand nominees of a lot of agricultural labourers? Better have given votes to foxes any day—far more intelligent. Palfrey pretends to believe in the people; if he's anything, he's the biggest Radical in Europe. I bet you he says 'democracy' in the next ten minutes; and I'll lay you ten to one he says it in the last ten minutes of his speech at Langstone—in public speeches it comes in the peroration."

"Oh, Lord Hackbut," said Dora, "I do hope you'll make a speech! That's what I should like to hear!"

"Only a word or two," he said, "just to tell 'em what an honour and privilege they enjoy in listening to the words of wisdom of the persuasive Palfrey."

Dora was very much amused by her neighbour. Before dinner was over, he asked her a few sudden questions about their young host, which she answered so diplomatically, that he burst out laughing again and declared with emphasis that she was an uncommonly clever little lady. When she rose with the rest of the ladies, he made her a low bow and expressed a hope that they might be friends.

"Yes," said Dora, with a quick look, "and allies too, perhaps, if we can come to terms."

"I ask nothing better," said the old Lord gallantly, and displaying his broken tooth.

One thing and one thing only interfered with Dora's pleasure on that evening. She was disagreeably conscious of the eyes of Mr. Leonard Vale. She had not seen Leonard on that day until she came down to dinner; and then he had been unable to speak to her. At dinner he had sat far down on the opposite side of the table; but she had felt that he was continually looking at her, and with variations of expression which annoyed her. Entreaty, expostulation, and even rebuke seemed to her to be directed at her from those expressive eyes. She

was annoyed ; she condemned him for silliness ; she feared that the keen-eyed old man beside her would notice those persistent looks. She made up her mind to speak very plainly to Mr. Vale when the next opportunity of speaking should come. Yet, when she had left the dining-room, she at once rebuked herself for making mountains out of molehills. She reminded herself that the young man had confessed himself a very weak creature, and that she had promised to befriend him. It was certain that his looks meant no more than a longing for another tonic dose of good advice. If she must find fault with him for staring, she determined not to speak as if she suspected an excess of devotion. She declared to herself that that would be foolish indeed, and would be in short like the behaviour of one of the silly women, who thought all men in love with them, and whom she had always and unequivocally condemned.

And yet, when the men joined them, Dora was vexed again by the airs of this young man. He looked pale, and dark under the eyes, aggressively interesting. He made no determined effort to come to her ; but he continued to stare, till Dora felt as if all the world must notice his staring. She gave him not a glance in return, and tried not to think of him. She had almost succeeded in this effort and the evening was drawing to a close, when she rose with some of the others to go into the next room, that they might look at a picture there. As they passed through the archway from one room to the other, Dora felt a hand touch hers and a scrap of paper left in her fingers. She started and looked a quick and angry question, but she only saw the back of Mr. Vale, as he moved away. Clara Chauncey, who was close beside her, began to ask questions with great interest about the picture ; and the others stopped before it, while Dora moved on alone to the mantelpiece at the end of the room. There she looked at the piece of paper with marked disfavour, and almost instantly allowed it to drop from her fingers on to the coals. When she said good-night to the gentlemen, she was careful to make no reply of any kind to the mute appeal of Leonard's eyes. He ground his heel into the carpet and swore under his breath, as he saw her vanish up the staircase.

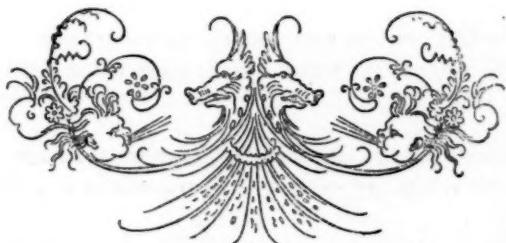
A little later another female figure, equally light, flitted down the staircase. The gentlemen had disappeared, and the footmen were removing the lights from the drawing-room. Mrs. Chauncey came in quickly and went straight to the fireplace in the further

room. "One moment," she said to the man who was moving the nearest lamp; "I won't keep you a moment, but I am afraid I threw a paper into the fireplace by mistake."

The footman held the lamp conveniently near. "I am so sorry to trouble you," said Clara, who was always polite to other people's servants, "but I foolishly threw a little paper into the fire. Ah, there it is! Yes, that's it; thank you! A little burnt? Yes, so it is; but not much. So lucky that it stuck on the black coals! Thank you!"

Half of the little paper was burnt away; but enough remained. Clara folded it carefully and held it hidden in her little hand as she sped upstairs for the second time. Safe in her room, she locked up the little note in a safe place, and then prepared herself for that repose which chloral, even more surely than innocence, can afford to the nervous female temperament.

(*To be continued.*)



Genius Loci.

SCENT of the lime-tree and breath of the rose
Hang in the wake of the wind as it blows :

Songs in the coppice, and mingled with these
The murmur of insects from under the trees :

The sun 's in the heaven, the lark 's on the wing
The fulness of summer grows out of the spring.

All these are round me, and you by my side,
You in the glory of youth at its pride ;

Checks that are roses, a rose for a mouth,
The wonderful lustre of eyes of the south ;—

Soothe me with music, and sing to me, sing,
Conjure me back to the passion of spring !

The sun on the rose, and the wind in the tree,
Are whispering love as you whisper to me ;

The wind on the tree, and the sun on the rose,
Will scourge them and scorch them when summer
time goes ;

Dreams for the dreamer and saws for the sage,
There is time to grow wise in the winter of age !

Therefore, sweet Pagan, whose name is a song,
Love me as long as the summer is long !

RENNELL RODD.

ATHENS, February 1889.

Spoilt Lives.

POOR MRS. JUMEAU!

"Now, young people, when I go out, let there be no noise in the house ; your mother is ill, so let her little folk be thoughtful for her !"

"Oh, is mother sick again ?" said little Ned with falling countenance.

"Poor Neddie ! he doesn't like mother to be ill ! We all have to be so quiet, and then there's nowhere to be ! It isn't like home when mother isn't about."

"Mary is right," chimed in Charlie, the eldest of the family ; "if I were big enough, I should run away and go to sea, mother's so often bad ! But father, isn't it funny ? Yesterday she was quite well, and doing all sorts of horrid things, helping the maids to clear out cupboards, and now, I dare say, she is too ill to move or speak, and to-morrow, perhaps, she'll be our jolly mother again, able to go shrimping with us, or anything else !"

"That's because your dear mother has no self, Charlie, boy ; no sooner does she feel a bit better than she does more than she can for us all, and then she is knocked up again ! I wish we could teach her to be selfish, for our sakes as well as hers, for to have her with us is better than anything she can do for us ; eh, Charlie ?"

"Indeed, yes ! We'd take lots of care of her if she'd let us ! But her illness must be queer. You know when we had scarlet fever, father ? Well, for weeks and weeks, after the fever was gone, I had no more strength than a tom-tit ; and you know I could not go about and do things, however unselfish I was (but I'm not, though). That's what is so queer ! Do you think Dr. Prideau understands about mother ?"

"Much better than you do, depend upon it, Charlie ; but I confess your mother's illness is puzzling to all of us. There,

children, off with you! I must write a letter or two before I go out."

Mr. Jumeau forgot to write his letters, and sat long, with his head between his hands, pondering the nature of his wife's ailments. What Charlie had put with a boy's rude bluntness had already occurred to him in a dim way. Mrs. Jumeau's illness certainly did not deprive her of bodily vigour; the attacks came on suddenly, left her as suddenly, and left her apparently in perfect health and gay spirits. And this was the more surprising, because, while an "attack" lasted, the extreme prostration, pallid countenance, and blue lips of the sufferer were painful to behold. Besides, his wife was so absolutely truthful by nature, so unselfish and devoted to her husband and family, that it was as likely she should be guilty of flagrant crime as that she should simulate illness. This sort of thing had gone on for several years. Poor Mr. Jumeau had spent his substance on many physicians, and with little result. "No organic disease." "Overdone." "Give her rest, nourishing food, frequent change of scene and thought; no excitement; Nature will work the cure in time—*in time*, my good sir. We must be patient." This sort of thing he had heard again and again; doctors did *not* differ, if that was any consolation.

He went up to have a last look at the sufferer. There she lay, stretched out with limbs composed, and a rigidity of muscle terribly like death. A tear fell on the cold cheek of his wife as Mr. Jumeau kissed it, and he went out aching with a nameless dread, which, if put into words, would run—some day, and she will wake no more out of this death-like stillness.

And she? She felt the tear, heard the sigh, noted the dejected footfalls of her husband, and her weak pulse stirred with a movement of—was it joy? But the "attack" was not over; for hours she lay here rigid, speechless, with closed eyes, taking no notice of the gentle opening of the door now and then when one or another came to see how she was. Were not her family afraid to leave her alone? No; we get used to anything, and the Jumeaus, servants and children, were well used to these "attacks" in the mistress of the house. Dr. Prideau came, sent by her husband, and used even violent measures to restore her, but to no effect; she was aware of these efforts, but was not aware that she resisted them effectually.

Business engagements were pressing, and it was late before Mr. Jumeau, anxious as he was, was able to return to his wife.

It was one of those lovely warm evenings we sometimes get late in May, when even London windows are opened to let in the breath of the spring. Nearly at the end of the street he heard the familiar strains of "Parsival," played with the vigour Wagner demands. His wife? It could be no one else. As he drew nearer, her exquisite touch was unmistakable. The attack was over, then? Strange to say, his delight was not unmixed. What were these mysterious attacks, and how were they brought on?

The evening was delightful. Mrs. Jumeau was in the gayest spirits; full of tenderness towards her husband, of motherly thought for her children, now fast asleep; ready to talk brightly on any subject except the attack of the morning; any allusion to this she would laugh off as a matter of too little consequence to be dwelt upon. The next morning she was down bright and early, having made up her mind to a *giro* with the children. They did not go a-shrimping, according to Charlie's forecast, but Kew was decided upon as "just the thing," and a long day in the gardens failed to tire mother or children.

"I must get to the bottom of this," thought Mr. Jumeau.

"Your question is embarrassing; if I say Mrs. Jumeau is suffering from *hysteria*, you will most likely get a wrong notion and discredit my words."

Mr. Jumeau's countenance darkened. "I should still be inclined to trust the evidence of my senses, and believe that my wife is unfeignedly ill."

"Exactly as I expected: simulated ailments and hysteria are hopelessly confounded; but no wonder; hysteria is a misnomer, used in the vaguest way, not even confined to women. Why, I knew a man, a clergyman in the North, who suffered from 'clergyman's sore throat'; he was a popular evangelical preacher, and there was no end to the sympathy his case evoked; he couldn't preach, so his devoted congregation sent him, now to the South of France, now to Algiers, now to Madeira. After each delightful sojourn he returned, looking plump and well, but unable to raise his voice above a hardly audible whisper. This went on for three years or so. Then his Bishop interfered; he must provide a curate in permanent charge, with nearly the full emoluments of the living. The following Sunday he preached, nor did he again lose his voice.

And this was an earnest and honest man, who would rather any day be at his work than wandering idly about the world. Plainly, too, in the etymological sense of the word, his complaint was not hysteria. But this is not an exceptional case: keep any man in his dressing-gown for a week or two—a bad cold, say—and he will lay himself out to be pitied and petted, will have half the ailments under the sun, and be at death's door with each. And this is your active man; a man of sedentary habits, notwithstanding his stronger frame, is nearly as open as a woman to the advances of this stealthy foe. Why, for that matter, I've seen it in a dog! Did you never see a dog limp pathetically on his three legs that he might be made much of for his lameness, until his master's whistle calls him off at a canter on all fours?"

"I get no nearer; what have these illustrations to do with my wife?"

"Wait a bit, and I'll try to show you. The throat would seem to be a common seat of the affection. I knew a lady—nice woman she was, too—who went about for years speaking in a painful whisper, whilst everybody said, 'Poor Mrs. Marjoribanks!' But one evening she managed to set her bed-curtains alight, when she rushed to the door, screaming, 'Ann! Ann! the house is on fire! Come at once!' The dear woman believed ever after that 'something burst' in her throat, and described the sensation minutely; her friends believed, and her doctor did not contradict. By the way, no remedy has proved more often effectual than a house on fire, only you will see the difficulties. I knew of a case, however, where the 'house-a-fire' prescription was applied with great effect. 'Twas in a London hospital for ladies; a most baffling case; patient had been for months unable to move a limb—was lifted in and out of bed like a log, fed as you would pour into a bottle. A clever young house-surgeon laid a plot with the nurses. In the middle of the night her room was filled with fumes, lurid light, &c. She tried to cry out, but the smoke was suffocating; jumped out of bed and made for the door—more choking smoke—threw up the sash—firemen, rope, ladder—she scrambled down, and was safe. The whole was a hoax, but it cured her, and the nature of the cure was mercifully kept secret. Another example: A friend of mine determined to put a young woman under 'massage' in her own home; he got a trained operator, forbade any of her family to see her, and waited for results. The girl did not mend; 'very

odd ! some reason for this,' he muttered ; and it came out that every night the mother had crept in to wish her child good-night ; the tender visits were put a stop to, and the girl recovered."

"Your examples are interesting enough, but I fail to see how they bear ; in each case, you have a person of weak or disordered intellect simulating a disease with no rational object in view. Now the beggars who know how to manufacture sores on their persons have the advantage—they do it for gain."

"I have told my tale badly ; these were not persons of weak or disordered intellect ; some of them, very much otherwise ; neither did they consciously simulate disease ; not one believed it possible to make the effort he or she was surprised into. The whole question belongs to the mysterious borderland of physical and psychological science—not pathological, observe ; the subject of disease and its treatment is hardly for the lay mind."

"I am trying to understand."

"It is worth your while ; if every man took the pains to understand the little that is yet to be known on this interesting subject, he might secure his own household, at any rate, from much misery and waste of vital powers ; and not only his household, but perhaps himself—yes, as I have tried to show, this that is called 'hysteria' is not necessarily an affair of sex."

"Go on ; I am not yet within appreciable distance of anything bearing on my wife's case."

"Ah, the thing is a million-headed monster ! hardly to be recognised by the same features in any two cases. To get at the *rationale* of the thing, we must take up human nature by the roots. We talk glibly in these days of what we get from our forefathers, what comes to us through our environments, and consider that in these two, we have the sum of human nature. Not a bit of it ; we have only accounted for some peculiarities in the individual ; independently of these, we come equipped with stock for the business of life of which too little account is taken. The subject is wide, so I shall confine myself to an item or two.

"We all come into the world—since we are beings of imperfect nature—subject to the uneasy stirring of some few primary desires. Thus, the gutter child and the infant prince are alike open to the workings of the desire for esteem, the desire for society, for power, &c. One child has this, and another that, desire more active and uneasy. Women, through the very modesty and dependence of their nature, are greatly moved by

the desire for esteem. They must be thought of, made much of, at any price. A man desires esteem, and he has meetings in the market-place, the chief-room at the feast ; the *petroleuse*, the city outcast, must have notoriety—the esteem of the bad—at any price, and we have a city in flames, and the Whitechapel murders. Each falls back on his experience and considers what will bring him that esteem, a gnawing craving after which is one of his earliest immaterial cognitions. But the good woman has comparatively few outlets. The esteem that comes to her is all within the sphere of her affections. Esteem she must have ; it is a necessity of her nature.

"*Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles,*" are truly to her, "human nature's daily food."

"Now, experience comes to her aid. When she is ill, she is the centre of attraction, the object of attention, to all who are dear to her ; she will be ill."

"You contradict yourself, man ! don't you see ? You are painting, not a good woman, but one who will premeditate, and act a lie !"

"Not so fast ! I am painting a good woman. Here comes in a condition which hardly any one takes into account. Mrs. Jumeau will lie with stiffened limbs and blue pale face for hours at a time. Is she simulating illness ? you might as well say that a man could simulate a gunshot wound. But the thing people forget is, the intimate relation and co-operation of body and mind ! that the body lends itself *involuntarily* to carry out the conceptions of the thinking brain. Mrs. Jumeau does not *think* herself into pallor, but every infinitesimal nerve fibre, which entwines each equally infinitesimal capillary which brings colour to the cheek, is intimately connected with the thinking brain, in obedience to whose mandates it relaxes or contracts. Its relaxation brings colour and vigour with the free flow of the blood, its contraction, pallor and stagnation, and the feeling as well as the look of being sealed in a death-like trance. The whole mystery depends on this co-operation of thought and substance of which few women are aware. The diagnosis is simply this, the sufferer has the craving for outward tokens of the esteem which is essential to her nature ; she recalls how such tokens accompany her seasons of illness, the sympathetic body perceives the situation, and she is ill ; by and by, the tokens of esteem cease to come with the attacks of illness, but the habit has been set up, and she goes on having 'attacks'

which bring real suffering to herself, and of the slightest agency in which she is utterly unconscious?"

Conviction slowly forced itself on Mr. Jumeau; now that his wife was shown utterly blameless, he could concede the rest. More, he began to suspect something rotten in the State of Denmark, or women like his wife would never have been compelled to make so abnormal a vent for a craving proper to human nature.

"I begin to see; what must I do?"

"In Mrs. Jumeau's case, I may venture to recommend a course which would not answer with one in a thousand. Tell her all I have told you. Make her mistress of the situation—I need not say, save her as much as you can from the anguish of self-contempt. Trust her, she will come to the rescue, and devise means to save herself; and, all the time she will want help from you, wise as well as tender. For the rest, those who have in less measure:—

"The reason firm, the temp'rate will,"—

'massage,' and other devices for annulling the extraordinary physical sensibility to mental conditions, and at the same time, excluding the patient from the possibility of the affectionate notice she craves, may do a great deal. But this mischief which, in one shape or other, blights the lives of, say, forty per cent. of our best and most highly organized women, is one more instance of how lives are ruined by education, not only imperfect, but proceeding on wrong lines."

"How could education help in this?"

"Why, let them know the facts, possess them of even so slight an outline as we have had to night, and the best women will take measures for self-preservation. Put them on their guard, that is all. It is not enough to give them accomplishments and all sorts of higher learning; these gratify the desire of esteem only in a very temporary way. But something more than a danger-signal is wanted. The woman, as well as the man, must have her share of the world's work, whose reward is the world's esteem. She must, even the cherished wife and mother of a family, be in touch with the world's needs, and ministering of the gifts she has, and that, because it is no dream that we are all brethren, and must therefore suffer from any seclusions from the *common* life."

Mrs. Jumeau's life was not "spoilt." It turned out as the

doctor predicted ; for days after his revelations she was ashamed to look her husband in the face ; but then, she called up her forces, fought her own fight and came off victorious, never alarming her family by another "attack."

MRS. SEDLEY'S TALE.

IT is very strange how a moral weakness in her child gives a mother the same sense of yearning pity that she has for a bad bodily infirmity. I wonder if that is how God feels for us when we go on year by year doing the thing we hate? I think a mother gets to understand many things about the dealings of God that are not plain to others. For instance, how it helps me to say, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins," when I think of my poor little Fanny's ugly fault. Though there is some return of it nearly every day, what could I do but forgive?

But forgiveness that does not heal is like the wretched ointments with which poor people dress their wounds. In one thing I know I have not done well ; I have hardly said a word to John about the poor little girlie's failing, though it has troubled me constantly for nearly a year. But I think he suspects there is something wrong ; we never talk quite freely about our shy pretty Fanny. Perhaps that is one reason for it. She is such a nervous timid little being, and looks so bewitching when the long lashes droop, the tender mouth quivers, and the colour comes and goes in the soft cheek, that we are shy of exposing, even to each other, the faults we see in our graceful fragile little girl. Perhaps neither of us quite trusts the other to deal with Fanny, and to use the knife sparingly.

But this state of things must not go on : it is a miserable thing to write down, but I cannot believe a word the child says ! and the evil is increasing. Only now and then used Fanny to be detected in what we called a "fib" ; but now, the terrible doubt lest that little mouth may be at any moment uttering lies takes the delight out of life, and accounts for the pale looks which give my kind husband so much concern.

For example, only within the last day or two I have noticed the following, and other such examples :—

"Fanny, did you remember to give my message to cook?"

"Yes, mother."

"And what did she say?"

"That she wouldn't be able to make any jam to-day because the fruit had not come."

I went into the kitchen shortly after, and found cook stirring the contents of a brass pan, and sad to say, I asked no questions. It was one of Fanny's circumstantial statements of the kind I have had most reason to doubt. Did she lie because she was afraid to own that she had forgotten? Hardly so: knowing the child's sensitive nature, we have always been careful not to visit her small misdemeanours with any punishment whenever she "owned up." And then, cowardice would hardly cause her to invent so reasonable an answer for cook. Again—

"Did you meet Mrs. Fleming's children?"

"Oh, yes, mother! and Berty was so rude! He pushed Dotty off the curb-stone!"

Nurse, who was sitting by the fire with baby, raised her eyebrows in surprise, and I saw the whole thing was an invention. Another more extraordinary instance:—

"Mother, when we were in the park we met Miss Butler, just by the fountains, you know; and she kissed me, and asked me how my mother is"—said apropos of nothing, in the most quiet easy way.

I met Miss Butler this morning and thanked her for the kind inquiries she had been making through my little girl; and—"Do you think Fanny grown?"

Miss Butler looked perplexed; Fanny was a great favourite of hers, perhaps because of the loveliness that her parents could not pretend to be unaware of.

"It is more than a month since I have seen the little maid, but I shall look in soon, and gladden her mother's heart with all the praises my sweet Fan deserves!"

Little she knew that shame and not pride dyed my cheek, but I could not disclose my Fanny's sad secret to even so near a friend.

But to talk it out with John is a different matter. He ought to know. And, certainly, men have more power than women to see into the reasons and the bearings of things. At any rate, my husband can see clearer than I. There had I been thinking for months in a desultory kind of way as to the why and wherefore of this ingrained want of truthfulness in the child, and yet I was no nearer a solution.

A new departure in the way of lying made me at last break the ice with John; indeed, this was the only subject about which we had ever had reserves.

"Mother, Hugh was so naughty at lessons this morning! He went close up to Miss Clare while she was writing, nudged her elbow on purpose and made her spill the ink all over the table-cloth!"

I chanced to meet Miss Clare in the hall, and remarked that I heard she had found Hugh troublesome this morning.

"Troublesome! Not at all, he was quite industrious and obedient."

I said nothing about the ink, but went straight to the school-room, to find the table neat as Miss Clare always leaves it, and no sign of even a fresh ink-spot. What possessed the child? This inveterate and inventive untruthfulness was like a form of madness. I sat in dismay for an hour or more, not thinking, but stunned by this new idea: that the child was not responsible for her words; and yet, could it be so? None of our children were so merry at play, so intelligent at lessons! Well, I would talk it over with John without the loss of another day.

"John, I am miserable about Fanny! Do you know the child tells fibs constantly?"

"Call them 'lies,' an ugly thing deserves an ugly name. What sort of lies? What tempts her to lie?"

John did not seem surprised. Perhaps he knew more of this misery than I supposed.

"That's the thing! Her fi--lies are so uncalled for, so unreasonable, that I do not know how to trust her."

"'Unreasonable?' You mean her tales don't hang together; that's a common case with liars. You know the saying,—'Liars should have good memories'?"

"Don't call the poor child a liar, John; I believe she is more to be pitied than blamed. What I mean is, you can't find rhyme or reason for the lies she tells"—and I gave my husband a few instances like those I have written above.

"Very extraordinary! There's a hint of malice in the Hugh and the ink-bottle tale, and a hint of cowardice in that about the jam, but for the rest, they are inventions pure and simple, with neither rhyme nor reason, as you say."

"I don't believe a bit in the malice. I was going to correct her for telling an unkind tale about Hugh, but you know how she hangs on her brother, and she told her tale with the most innocent face. I am convinced there was no thought of harming him."

"Are you equally sure that she never says what is false to cover a fault ; in fact, out of cowardice ?"

"No ; I think I have found her out more than once in ingenious subterfuges. You know what a painfully nervous child she is. For instance, I found the other day a blue cup off that cabinet with handle gone, hidden behind the woodwork. Fanny happened to come in at the moment, and I asked her if she knew who had broken it.

"No, mother, I don't know, but I think it was Mary when she was dusting the cabinet ; indeed, I'm nearly sure I heard a crash !"

"But the child could not meet my eye, and there was a sort of blenching as of fear about her."

"But, as a rule, you do not notice these symptoms ?"

"As a rule poor Fanny's tarradiddles come out in the most quiet, easy way, with all the boldness of innocence ; and even when she is found out, and the lie brought home to her, she looks bewildered rather than convicted."

"My dear, I wish you would banish the whole tribe of foolish and harmful expressions whose tendency is to make light of sin. Call a spade a spade. A 'tarradiddle' is a thing to make merry over ; a fib you smile and wink at ; but a *lie*—why, the soul is very far gone from original righteousness that can endure the name, even while guilty of the thing."

"That's just it ; I cannot endure to apply so black a name to the failings of our child ; for, do you know, I begin to suspect that poor little Fanny does it unawares—does not know in the least that she has departed from the fact. I have had a horrible dread upon me from time to time that her defect is a mental, and not a moral one. That she has not the clear perception of true and false with which the most of us are blessed."

"Whe—ew !" from John ; but his surprise was feigned. I could see now that he had known what was going on all the time, and had said nothing, because he had nothing to say ; I could see that in his heart he agreed with me about our lovely child. The defect arose from a clouded intelligence, which showed itself in this way only, now ; but how dare we look forward ? Now I saw why poor John was so anxious to have the offence called by the blackest moral name. He wished to save us all from the suspicion of an evil—worse, because less open to cure. We looked blankly at each other, John trying to carry it all off with a light air, but his attempt was a conspicuous failure.

I forgot to say that my sister Emma was staying with us, the "clever woman of the family," who was "going in" for all sorts of things, to come out, we believed, at the top of her profession as a lady doctor. She had taken no part in the talk about Fanny, rather tiresome of her, as I wanted to know what she thought ; but now, while we were vainly trying to hide from each other our dismay, she broke out into a long low laugh, which, to say the least of it, seemed a little unfeeling.

"Oh, you absurd parents ! You are too good and earnest, and altogether too droll ! Why in the world, instead of sitting there with blank eyes—conjuring up bogeys to frighten each other—why don't you look the thing in the face, and find out by the light of modern thought what really ails Fan ? Poor pet ! 'Save me from my parents !' is a rendering which might be forgiven her."

"Then you don't think there's any mental trouble ?" we cried in a breath, feeling already as if a burden were lifted, and we could straighten our backs and walk abroad.

"Mental trouble !" what nonsense ! But there, I believe all you parents are alike. Each pair thinks their own experiences entirely new ; their own children, the first of the kind born into the world ! Now, a mind that had had any scientific training would see at once that poor Fanny's 'lies'—if I must use John's terrible bad word—inventions, I should have called them, are symptomatic, as you rightly guessed, Annie, of certain brain conditions, but of brain disease—oh, no ! Why, foolish people, don't you see you are entertaining an angel unawares ? This vice of 'lying' you are mourning over is the very quality that goes to the making of poets ! "

"Poets and angels are well in their places," said John, rather crossly, "but my child must speak the truth. What she states for a fact, I must know to be a fact, according to the poor common-sense view of benighted parents ! "

"And there is your work as parents ! Teach her truth, as you would teach her French or sums—a little to-day, a little more to-morrow, and every day a lesson. Only as you teach her the nature of truth will the gift she has be effectual. But I really should like to know what is your notion about truth—are we born with it, or educated up to it ?"

"I am not sure that we care to be experimented upon, and held up to the world as blundering parents," said I ; "perhaps we had better keep our crude notions to ourselves." I spoke

rather tartly I know, for I was more vexed for John than for myself. That he should be held up to ridicule in his own house —by a sister of mine, too!

"Now I have vexed you both! How horrid I am! And all the time, as I watch you with the children, I don't feel good enough to tie your shoes! Don't I say to myself twenty times a day, 'After all, the insight and love parents get from above is worth a thousandfold more than science has to teach?'"

"Nay, Emma, 'tis we who have to apologise for being jealous of science—that's the fact—and quick to take offence. Make it up, there's a good girl! and let Annie and me have the benefit of your advice about our little girl, for truly we are in a fog!"

"Well, I think you were both right in considering that her failing had two sources: moral cowardice the first; she does something wrong, or wrong in her eyes, and does not tell,—why?"

"Aye, there's the difficulty; why is she afraid to tell the truth? I may say that we have never punished her, or ever looked coldly on her for any fault but this of prevarication. The child is so timid that we feared severe measures might make the truth the more difficult."

"There I think you are right. And we have our fingers on one of the weak places: Fanny tells lies out of sheer fear—moral weakness; causeless it may be, but there it is. And I'm not so sure that it is causeless; she is always in favour for good behaviour, gentleness, obedience, and that kind of thing; indeed, this want of veracity seems to me her one fault. Now, don't you think the fear of having her parents look coldly on her and think less well of her may be, to such a timid, clinging child, a great temptation to hide a fault?"

"Very likely; but one does not see how to act; would you pass over her faults altogether without inquiry or notice?"

"I'm afraid you must use the knife there boldly, for that is the tenderest way in the end. Show little Fan the depth of your love—that there is *no* fault you cannot forgive in her, but that the one fault which hurts you most is not to hear the exact truth."

"I see. Suppose she has broken a valuable vase and hides the fact, I am to unearth her secret—not, as I am very much inclined to do, let it lie buried for fear of involving her in worse falsehood, but show her the vase and tax her with hiding it."

"And her immediate impulse will be to say, 'I didn't.' No; make sure of your ground, then show her the pieces; say the vase

was precious, but you do not mind about that ; the thing that hurts you is that she should not trust her mother. I can imagine one of the lovely scenes you mothers have with your children. Too good for outsiders to look in upon ! ”

The tears came into my eyes for I could imagine the scene, too. Could see the way to draw my child closer and closer by *always* forgiving, always comprehending and loving her, and always protesting against the falsehood which would rise between us. I was lost in a delicious reverie : how I might sometime come to show her that her mother’s ever-ready forgiveness was but a faint picture of what some one calls the “ all-forgiving gentleness of God,” when I heard John break in :—

“ Yes, I can see that if we both make a point of free and tender forgiveness of every fault, on condition that she owns up, we may in time cure her of lying out of sheer fear. But I don’t see that she gets the principle of truth any more. The purely inventive lies go on as before, and the child is not to be trusted.”

“ ‘ Purely inventive,’ there you have it ! Don’t you see ? The child is full of imagination, and figures to herself endless scenes, evolved like the German student’s camel. The thousand and one things which *might* happen are so real to her that the child is, as you said, bewildered ; hardly able to distinguish the one which has happened. Now, it’s perfect nonsense to lament over this as a moral failing ; it is a want of mental balance, not that any quality is deficient, but that herceptive power runs away with her perceptive ; she sees the many things that might be, more readily than the thing that is. Doesn’t she delight in fairy tales ? ”

“ Well, to tell the truth, we have thought them likely to foster her failing, and have kept her a good deal on a diet of facts ! ”

“ I shouldn’t wonder if you are wrong there. An imperious imagination like Fanny’s demands its proper nourishment. Let her have her daily meal : ‘ The Babes in the Wood,’ ‘ The Little Match-Girl,’ ‘ The Snow-Maiden,’ tales and legends half-historic ; above all, the lovely stories of the Bible, whatever she can figure to herself and live over and over ; but *not* twaddling tales of the daily doings of children like herself, whether funny or serious. The child wants an opening into the larger world, where all things are possible and where beautiful things are always happening. Give her in some form this necessary food, and her mind will be so full of delicious

imaginings that she will be under no temptation to invent about the commonplaces of every-day life."

My husband laughed: "My dear Emma, you must let us do our best with the disease! the cure is too wild! 'Behold, this dreamer cometh!' think of sending the child through life with this label!"

"Your quotation is unfortunate, and you have not heard me out. I do believe that to starve her imagination would be to do real wrong to the child. But at the same time, you must diligently cultivate the knowledge and the love of the truth. Now, the truth is, no more than the fact as it is; and 'tis my belief that Fanny's falsehoods come entirely from want of perception of the fact through pre-occupation of mind."

"Well, what must we do?"

"Why, give her daily, or half-a-dozen times a day, lessons in truth. Send her to the window: 'Look out, Fanny, and tell me what you see.' She comes back, having seen a cow where there is a horse. She looks again and brings a true report, and you teach her that it is not true to say the thing which is not. You send a long message to the cook, requiring the latter to write it down as she receives it and send you up the slate: if it is all right, the kiss Fanny gets is for speaking the truth: gradually, she comes to revere truth, and distinguishes between the facts of life where truth is all in all, and the wide realms of make-believe, where fancy may have free play."

"I do believe you are right, Emma; most of Fanny's falsehoods seem to be told in such pure innocence, I should not wonder if they do come out of the kingdom of make-believe. At any rate, we'll try Emma's specific, shall we, John?"

"Indeed, yes; and carefully, too. It seems to me to be reasonable, the more so, as we don't find any trace of malice in Fanny's misleading statements."

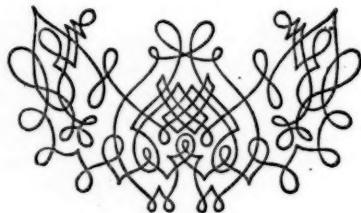
"Oh, if there were, the treatment would be less simple; first, you should deal with the malice, and then, *teach* the love of truth in daily lessons. That is the mistake so many people make. They think their children are capable of loving and understanding *truth* by nature, which they are not. The best parents have to be on the watch to hinder all opportunities of mis-statement."

"And now, that you may see how much we owe you, let me tell you of the painful example always before our eyes, which has done more than anything to make me dread Fanny's

failing. It is an open secret, I fear, but do not let it go further out of this house. You know Mrs. Casterton, our Vicar's wife? It is a miserable thing to say, but you cannot trust a word she utters. She tells you Miss So-and-So has a bad kind of scarlet fever, and even while she is speaking you know it is false; husband, children, servants, neighbours, none can be blind to the distressing fact, and she has acquired the sort of simpering manner a woman gets when she loses respect and self-respect. What, if Fanny had grown up like her?"

"Poor woman! and this shame might have been spared her, had her parents been alive to their duty!"

CHARLOTTE M. MASON.



A Blind, Deaf Mute.

OF all the numerous works of the celebrated Dr. Whewell there is none more interesting to the general reader, and perhaps to the philosopher also, than 'The Plurality of Worlds,' in which, after having discussed the subject suggested by the title, the author proceeds to support the theory that man occupies a worthy pre-eminence in the regard of the Creator, by reason of his possession of certain attributes denied to the brute creation, and that these attributes, being naturally inborn, will appear under the most adverse conditions, having, to use his own words, "a special and indestructible germ in human nature."

To illustrate his meaning he gives a description of a child who, at a very early age, became both blind, deaf, and dumb, whose case attracted his attention and study, and, it is believed, suggested the above argument to his mind.

As 'The Plurality of Worlds' has become a Classic, and many thousands of readers have perused Dr. Whewell's description of this "child," now a blind, deaf mute of seventy, it may be assumed that a short account of the lady will not be uninteresting to the readers of this Magazine, or—as no one has better sources of information on the subject (as the lady's nephew and constant visitor) than the writer—without a certain value to students of Nature's mysteries.

The lady who proved so interesting a study to Dr. Whewell, who in fact visited her till his death, was born in and still resides at Cambridge, where her family have been for many years. At her birth she was a fairly healthy child, in possession of all her faculties, and at the early age of three years had learnt to speak pretty plainly.

One night, after the child had been put to bed, her nurse, who seems to have possessed more than the ordinary share of stupidity, thought it would be a good joke to dress up as a

ghost, and present herself before her charge in that character in the middle of the night. The "joke" came off, and succeeded but too well. Literally frightened out of her senses, the child fell into a fit, which was succeeded on recovering by another and another. This succession of fits was followed by a high fever, the little child frequently calling out that she could not see her papa or mamma. She recovered from the fever, but apparently at the cost of her voice, for after that she never spoke. Her sight and hearing had already gone. But though bereft of her senses, her mind remained intact, and, as Dr. Whewell has observed, it was "the constant dwelling-place not only of human affections but of human thoughts."

At that time there were no schools for the blind, and even now there are none for those in her condition, so the little girl received no education, and certainly was too young at the time of her calamity to have retained many outward impressions; but with all this she did not remain much behind other children of her age.

Her sight, hearing, and speech all seemed accumulated and merged in her sense of touch and concentrated at her fingers' ends. With these useful members she can not only sew, knit, crotchet, braid, and do wool work, but also thread needles and embroider. And this not in a clumsy way, but with a neatness the writer has never seen surpassed. Every stitch is exact, and her work presents an evenness and perfection as a whole which is the admiration of her lady friends. Every day she makes her bed and dusts her room, puts her drawers straight, and is a model of order and regularity. This does not appear so wonderful, but how she could teach herself to do the fine work above mentioned appears marvellous. It was done, however, simply by passing her hands over those of others when so employed. Her memory is marvellous. A thing once learnt is never forgotten, and a person introduced to her by means of the deaf-and-dumb alphabet, and who has once *shaken hands* with her, is always recognised by the sense of touch afterwards, though years may have intervened. She has never been ailing, and always appears strong and happy when walking out, or occupied by her work or her thoughts.

At first sight it appears difficult to understand how a person who is blind can converse with another by means of the deaf-and-dumb alphabet, the letters of which are ordinarily formed by the fingers of the speaker, and whose hands have to be attentively

watched by the person with whom the conversation is being carried on. This apparent difficulty may, however, be explained, away by reference to the mode of making particular letters. The letter G, for instance, is formed by placing the right fist upon the left. In this case the lady places her right fist upon the left fist of the *auditor* (if he may be so termed). The vowels are formed by touching the tips of the fingers of the left hand, the thumb for A, the first finger for E, and so on. Instead of touching her own fingers, she touches the fingers of the persons with whom she is conversing. Another letter is represented by crossing the first fingers, and in this case also her first finger is laid across that of her auditor. She borrows your hand, in fact, and uses it as her own.

When she is being spoken to, the position is reversed, her fingers being passive, and touched or crossed, as the case may be, by those of the speaker.

This may seem a more difficult mode of conversing than the ordinary way, but in practice it is perfectly easy. No doubt it would be difficult for two persons, one of whom had closed his eyes, to converse in this way, as the one could scarcely distinguish whether the other touched his hand with one or two fingers; but when it is remembered that this lady's sense of touch is so acute as to enable her to thread a fine needle, or to recognize a friend after an absence of years by simply feeling the hand, it may readily be understood that such a trivial matter as this presents no difficulties to her. As before observed, the loss of three senses appears to be compensated by the increased sense of touch she possesses at her fingers' ends.

Through all her actions the desire to be thought like other people is very apparent. Other people read books and write letters, therefore she must do so. A good idea of this peculiarity may be best conveyed by a description of her daily habits.

Every morning in the summer she dresses and joins the family at the breakfast-table. (In the winter she prefers to take her breakfast upstairs, in which—as it is hardly necessary to say her will is law—she is indulged.) Breakfast over, a touch on the hand suffices to let her know the time for family prayers has arrived, when she kneels down with the others and performs her devotions. Then she retires to her bedroom, and having put matters straight there to her satisfaction, it is time for her to consider whether, and if so, where she shall take her morning walk, and she imparts her ideas on the subject to a companion.

If too wet for walking out, there will be some fancy work or sewing to be completed, which will occupy her till the mid-day meal.

After dinner she takes up the newspaper or a book, always the right side up, and apparently believes she is reading. It is certainly not intended as a fraud on her companions, for the reading is as regularly done when she is alone as when others are with her. An after-dinner nap will perhaps follow, or there will be a letter to write, that is to say, a number of irregular lines will be drawn from left to right on a sheet of paper. Having thus, as she imagines, committed her thoughts to paper—for she has never been taught to write—she puts the letter into an envelope and addresses it, when it is handed to a servant, who pretends to stamp and post it for her.

With those who are familiar with her gestures and the deaf-and-dumb alphabet she can hold rapid conversations, and altogether it is not difficult to imagine that with her resources the day flies “all too soon.”

When it is time to retire to rest, her propensity for being like other people again appears. She must have a lighted candle to go to bed with, and considers herself much wronged when she has to be content, for the sake of precaution against fire, with a kind of gauze-wire lantern somewhat resembling a miner’s in appearance. Her sense of propriety and decorum is great, and nothing offends so much as any attempt—in her opinion—to break through their boundaries. Anecdotes of her little peculiarities in this respect might be multiplied to fill pages, but the following may suffice for examples.

Occasionally she had been in the habit of giving a friendly call on the lady occupant of the next bedroom after every one had retired for the night, to see if she was comfortably disposed and generally all right; and for a little “finger chat ;” and one night it chanced that the usual occupant of this room slept elsewhere, and her bed was given over to the use and occupation of the writer. The fact of these occasional visits had not been mentioned or thought of, and in all the peaceful quietude of a calm conscience and a mind at ease, the new occupant, with an utter contempt of locks and bars, disposed himself to slumber. Imagine his surprise when, at the midnight hour, his half-sleep was rudely disturbed by hasty footsteps outside, quickly followed by the loud bursting open of the door by a white-robed figure. The noise was increased by the fact that another figure,

also in the same ghostly attire, was desperately struggling with the first to pull her back, but in vain. There was also a distant sound of opening doors and smothered laughter. Having with some difficulty freed herself from her adversary, who at once disappeared, the first ghost advanced with determined footsteps to the bed. The first dazed impression of the "sleeper awakened" was that somehow or other he had got into the wrong room, and this feeling was rather confirmed by the startling movements of the lady herself, who with vigorous hand was pushing forward over the bedclothes. Escape was impossible, and as a last resource the lady was practicably informed that thus far she should go and no further, by an outstretched hand and arm. She stopped and felt the hand for one moment. The touch was enough for her to find out who it was, and she fled even quicker than she came. But it was after her adversary in the late struggle that she went, and the motive was revenge for not having been informed of the late change of occupants that had taken place. She was happily eluded, however, and her injured sense of propriety had to find vent in a few vigorous "bangs" at a closed door. This revengeful feeling, however, soon gave way to a better spirit, and the next morning a broad smile, not to say a grin, expanded the features of the lady, as with rapid gestures and spelling she rallied the writer on the last night's adventures, and his evident disinclination for her presence. This adventure is now a standing joke, and the story, as related by her, with sundry additions to the actual facts, is going the round amongst her friends.

Another day she was accidentally pushed with about sufficient force, as a matter of fact, to damage the plumage of a well-developed fly ; in legal language it might have been termed "Injuria sine damno," but it was not so treated by the injured lady. Far from it ; her marvellous sense of touch no doubt magnified the impact a hundredfold, and she evidently felt the full application of the dictum of Blackstone where he says, "If a party be forcibly attacked in his person or property, it is lawful for him to repel force by force, and the breach of peace which happens is chargeable upon him only who began the fray," and acting upon the principle thus laid down by the learned gentleman above quoted, the offence was at once punished by a sounding slap on the face. It was soon done, there was no half measures here. This was sufficient condonation of the offence, however, and good nature rapidly taking the place of the little

resentment that had been so practically displayed, apologies were offered all round. Happily the lady is not very powerful, and the result of the "fray" was not serious. The fact that she was so well able to protect herself seemed all at once to strike this vigorous self-defender in a humorous light, and suggestions were playfully made that the aggressor had got, on the whole, rather the worst of it, and "didn't she think it was good fun." Somehow the other party didn't see it, and generally looks rather stoical when the story is related, especially when the injured shoulder is rubbed rather quickly to indicate the prodigious force with which the collision took place.

On another occasion three or four new arm-chairs had been imported into the drawing-room. They were immediately felt over with much curiosity, in order to ascertain which was the most comfortable. The choice was soon made, for it was by a master hand; and the easiest chair was for ever afterwards appropriated to her own particular use, and held literally by right of possession and "settlement"; for nothing would induce her to take another chair.

Some time afterwards the ordinary chairs in the dining-room were replaced by others with hard leather seats without stuffing. The course to be pursued in this sudden strait was soon determined. She must either have a chair with a soft seat from the drawing-room or a cushion; and a cushion she had accordingly. The writer, who has himself a hankering after comfortable seats, submits that in this she was very sensible, and if the subject allowed of it, would descant in no unmeasured terms upon the folly of having chairs to suit fashion instead of the human frame.

In connection with this subject of chairs might be mentioned a peculiar habit the lady has of storing in her memory all the circumstances connected with the deaths of her relatives and friends, and recounting them with an infinity of detail, and a face drawn out for the occasion, to her visitors. When this fancy is on her it is needless to say that they wish themselves anywhere but where they are. A relative, before her death, slipped off a shiny leather abomination of a chair, in a fit, from which she never recovered. This chair (which has since been removed) was always pointed out first, and was a kind of foundation on which she built other like memories of departed friends. Happily, however, this morbid fit takes her but rarely, as she is generally bright and gay.

She has also a whimsical kind of generosity which prompts her frequently to give away little things to her friends, useful in themselves perhaps, but for which she herself has no manner of use. The bonnet of a lady visitor which did not meet with her approval was condemned at once, and after having discussed the comparative merits of her own milliner, she disappeared to return after a short interval with a bonnet, which she graciously presented to her friend with many becks and smiles. Needless to say, the bonnet was entirely a thing of the past, both in fashion and utility, and had been stored for many years in her bedroom, which has become a kind of museum from which marvellous things are at times produced, and which is always kept by her under lock and key.

Another day when some fruit had been given her she in her turn gave all the apples she had received to a friend, apples being of all fruits the only kind she does not care for.

Notwithstanding the above, she has very real sympathies and her feelings are easily worked upon. For a friend in distress her heart is ever open; and, on the other hand, if anything occurs to give her the idea that she is slighted, as when a visitor leaves without bidding her "good-bye," she takes some time to get over it.

It is not without cause that her bedroom has been called a museum, as during the last fifty years whatever has been given to her that is not of a perishable nature has been stored there, and sometimes some most astounding relics of the past are produced, but this is but seldom. As a rule they are scrupulously guarded, and no one but herself has any idea of the contents of the numerous trunks and boxes in her bedroom.

She herself, however, knows everything that she has and where to look for it, and it is supposed that when she locks herself in her bedroom at a certain time in the day, which she sometimes does, she is feeling over, and thinking about her treasures, with what ideas for their future disposal is not known.

One of the very first reflections that arises from a consideration of this unique character, is that for her, as for everything and everyone else, there is compensation. Her constant occupation and freedom from worry and care for the morrow keep her in health and consequently in good spirits. Her notions of the outer world, crude as they are, afford ample material for her simple thoughts and contribute the more to her happiness.

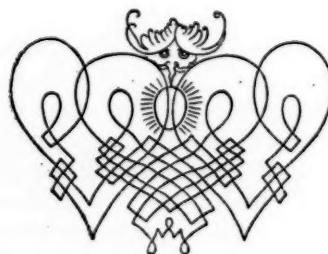
The want of the three of the most important senses is supplied

by the increased sense of touch (that of scent seems not to be augmented), and marvellous to relate, although this sense is so acute, she feels pain but slightly, and what is to most people a horrible moment (when in the dentist's operating chair) possesses no terror for her, as she scarcely feels the forceps or the drill, in fact she rather likes it. To have a tooth extracted is to her a pleasing excitement. If this is not compensation, what is?

The writer is not presumptuous enough to add anything to Dr. Whewell's reflections on the particular subject of man's intellectual superiority, but will merely submit that, with this case before them, no one can deny it, or think that a better illustration could have been chosen by the learned doctor for his text. Imagine an animal similarly placed! At the very best it could but drag out a short and miserable existence. The explanation may be found in Cowper's words—

“ Man's heart had been impenetrably sealed,
Like theirs that cleave the flood or graze the field,
Had not his Maker's all-bestowing hand
Given him a soul, and bade him understand.”

C. PERCY JONES.



Exotic Birds for Britain.

THERE are countries with a less fertile soil and a worse climate than ours, and yet richer in bird life. Nevertheless, England is not poor; the species are not few in number, and some are extremely abundant. Unfortunately many of the finer kinds have been too much sought after; persecuted first for their beauty, then for their rarity, until now we are threatened with their total extinction. As these kinds become unobtainable, those which stand next in the order of beauty and rarity are persecuted in their turn; and in a country as densely populated as ours, where birds cannot hide themselves from human eyes, such persecution must eventually cause their destruction. Meanwhile the bird population does not decrease. Every place in Nature, like every property in Chancery, has more than one claimant to it, and sometimes the claimants are many; and as long as the dispute lasts all live out of the estate. For there are always two or more species subsisting on the same kind of food, possessing similar habits, and frequenting the same localities. It is consequently impossible for man to exterminate any one species without indirectly benefiting some other species, which attracts him in a less degree, or not at all. This is unfortunate, for as the bright kinds, or those we esteem most, diminish in numbers the less interesting kinds multiply, and we lose much of the pleasure which bird life is fitted to give us. When we visit woods, or other places to which birds chiefly resort, in districts uninhabited by man, or where he pays little or no attention to the feathered creatures, the variety of the bird life encountered affords a new and great delight. There is a constant succession of new forms and new voices; and in a single day as many species may be met with as one would find in England by searching diligently for a whole year. And yet this may happen in a district possessing no more species than

England boasts ; and the actual number of individuals may be even less than with us. In sparrows, for instance, of the one common species we are exceedingly rich ; but in bird life generally, in variety of birds, especially in those of graceful forms and beautiful plumage, we have been growing poorer for the last fifty years, and have now come to so low a state that it becomes us to inquire whether it is not in our power to better ourselves. It is an old familiar truth—a truism—that it is easier to destroy than to restore or build up ; nevertheless, some comfort is to be got from the reflection that in this matter we have up till now been working against Nature. She loves not to bring forth food where there are none to thrive on it ; and when our unconsidered action had made these gaps, when, despising her gifts or abusing them, we had destroyed or driven out her finer kinds, she fell back on her lowlier kinds—her reserve of coarser, more generalized species—and gave them increase, and bestowed the vacant places which we had created on them. What she has done she will undo, or assist us in undoing ; for we should be going back to her methods, and should have her with and not against us. Much might yet be done to restore the balance among our native species. Not by legislation, albeit all laws restraining the wholesale destruction of bird life are welcome. On this subject the Honourable Auberon Herbert has said, and his words are golden :—“For myself, legislation or no legislation, I would turn to the friends of animals in this country, and say, ‘If you wish that the friendship between man and animals should become a better and truer thing than it is at present, you must make it so by countless individual efforts, by making thousands of centres of personal influence.’”

The subject is a large one. In this paper the question of the introduction of exotic birds will be chiefly considered. Birds have been blown by the winds of chance over the whole globe, and have found rest for their feet. That a large number of species, suited to the conditions of this country, exist scattered about the world is not to be doubted, and by introducing a few of these we might accelerate the change so greatly to be desired. At present a very considerable amount of energy is spent in hunting down the small contingents of rare species that once inhabited our island, and still resort annually to its shores, persistently endeavouring to re-establish their colonies. A less amount of labour and expense would

serve to introduce a few foreign species each year, and the reward would be greater, and would not make us ashamed. We have generously given of our own wild animals to other countries ; and from time to time we receive cheering reports of an abundant increase in at least two of our exportations—to wit, the rabbit and the sparrow. We are surely entitled to some return. Dead animals, however rich their pelt or bright their plumage may be, are not a fair equivalent. Dead things are too much with us. London has become a mart for this kind of merchandise for the whole of Europe, and the traffic is not without a reflex effect on us ; for life in the inferior animals has come or is coming to be merely a thing to be lightly taken by human hands, in order that its dropped garment may be sold for filthy lucre. There are warehouses in this city where it is possible for a person to walk ankle-deep—literally to wade—in bright-plumaged bird-skins, and see them piled shoulder-high on either side of him—a sight to make the angels weep ! Not the angel called woman. It is not that she is naturally more cruel than man ; bleeding wounds and suffering in all its forms, even the sigh of a burdened heart, appeal to her quick sympathies, and draw the ready tears ; but her intellect is less developed. The appeal must in all cases be direct and through the medium of her senses, else it is not seen and not heard. If she loves the ornament of a gay-winged bird, and is able to wear it with a light heart, it is because it calls up no mournful image to her mind ; no little tragedy enacted in some far-off wilderness, of the swift child of air fallen and bleeding out its bright life, and its callow nestlings, orphaned of the breast that warmed them, dying of hunger in the tree. We know, at all events, that out of a female population of many millions in this country, so far only ten women, possibly fifteen, have been found to raise their voices—raised so often and so loudly on other questions—to protest against the barbarous and abhorrent fashion of wearing slain birds as ornaments. The degrading business of supplying the demand for this kind of feminine adornment must doubtless continue to flourish in our midst, commerce not being compatible with morality, but the material comes from other lands, unblessed as yet with wild bird protection acts, and “individual efforts, and thousands of centres of personal influence ;” it comes mainly from the tropics, where men have brutish minds and birds a brilliant plumage. This trade, therefore, does not greatly affect the question of our native bird life, and the

consideration of the means, which may be within our reach, of making it more to us than it now is.

Some species from warm and even hot climates have been found to thrive well in England, breeding in the open air ; as, for instance, the black and the black-necked swans, the Egyptian goose, the mandarin and summer ducks, and others too numerous to mention. But these birds are semi-domestic, and are usually kept in enclosures, and that they can stand the climate and propagate when thus protected from competition is not strange ; for we know that several of our hardy domestic birds —the fowl, pea-fowl, Guinea-fowl, and Muscovy duck—are tropical in their origin. Furthermore, they are all comparatively large, and if they ever become feral in England, it will not be for many years to come. That these large kinds thrive so well with us is an encouraging fact ; but the question that concerns us at present is the feasibility of importing birds of the grove, chiefly of the Passerine order, and sending them forth to give a greater variety and richness to our bird life. To go with such an object to tropical countries would only be to court failure. Nature's highest types, surpassing all others in exquisite beauty of form, brilliant colouring, and perfect melody, can never be known to our woods and groves. These rarest avian gems may not be removed from their setting, and to those who desire to know them in their unimaginable lustre, it will always be necessary to cross oceans and penetrate into remote wildernesses. We must go rather to regions where the conditions of life are hard, where winters are long and often severe, where Nature is not generous in the matter of food, and the mouths are many, and the competition great. Nor even from such regions could we take any strictly migratory species with any prospect of success. Still, limiting ourselves to the resident, and consequently the hardest kinds, and to those possessing only a partial migration, it is surprising to find how many there are to choose from, how many are charming melodists, and how many have the bright tints in which our native species are so sadly lacking. The field from which the supply can be drawn is very extensive, and includes the continent of Europe, the countries of North Asia, a large portion of North America and Antarctic America, or South Chili and Patagonia. It would not be going too far to say that for every English species, inhabiting the garden, wood, field, stream, or waste, at least half-a-dozen resident species, with similar habits, might be obtained from the countries men-

tioned which would be superior to our own in melody (the nightingale and lark excepted), bright plumage, grace of form, or some other attractive quality.

The question then arises, What reason is there for believing that these exotics, imported necessarily in small numbers, would succeed in winning a footing in our country, and become a permanent addition to its avifauna? For it has been admitted that our species are not few, in spite of the losses that have been suffered, and that the bird population does not diminish, however much its character may have altered and deteriorated from the aesthetic point of view, and probably also from the utilitarian. There are no vacant places. Thus, the streams are fished by herons, grebes, and kingfishers, while the rushy margins are worked by coots and gallinules, and, above the surface, reed- and sedge-warblers, with other kinds, inhabit the reed-beds. The decaying forest tree is the province of the woodpecker, of which there are three kinds; and the trunks and branches of all trees, healthy or decaying, are quartered by the small creeper, that leaves no crevice unexplored in its search for minute insects and their eggs. He is assisted by the nuthatch; and in summer the wryneck comes (if he still lives), and deftly picks up the little active ants that are always wildly careering over the boles. The foliage is gleaned by warblers and others; and not even the highest terminal twigs are left unexamined by tits and their fellow-searchers after little things. Thrushes seek for worms in moist grounds about the woods; starlings and rooks go to the pasture lands; the lark and his relations keep to the cultivated fields; and there also dwells the larger partridge. Waste and stony grounds are occupied by the chats, and even on the barren mountain summits the ptarmigan gets his living. Wagtails run on the clean margins of streams; and littoral birds of many kinds are in possession of the entire sea-coast. Thus, the whole ground appears to be already sufficiently occupied, the habitats of distinct species overlapping each other like the scales on a fish. And when we have enumerated all these, we find that scores of others have been left out. The important fly-catcher; the wren, Nature's diligent little housekeeper, that leaves no dusty corner uncleansed; and the pigeons, that have a purely vegetable diet. The woods are also ranged by jays, cuckoos, owls, hawks, magpies, butcher-birds—Nature's gamekeepers, with a licence to kill, which, after the manner of gamekeepers, they exercise somewhat indiscrimin-

ately. Above the earth, the air is peopled by swifts and swallows in the daytime, and by goatsuckers at night. And, as if all these were not enough, the finches are found scattered everywhere, from the most secluded spot in Nature to the noisy public thoroughfare, and are eaters of most things, from flinty seed to softest caterpillar. This being the state of things, one might imagine that experience and observation are scarcely needed to prove to us that the exotic, strange to the conditions, and where its finest instincts would perhaps be at fault, would have no chance of surviving. Nevertheless, odd as it may seem, the small stock of facts bearing on the subject which we possess point to a contrary conclusion. It might have been assumed, for instance, that the red-legged partridge would never have established itself with us, where the ground was already fully occupied by a native species, which possessed the additional advantage of a more perfect protective colouring. Yet, in spite of being thus handicapped, the stranger has conquered a place, and has spread throughout the greater part of England. Even more remarkable is the case of the pheasant, with its rich plumage, and native of a hot region ; yet our cold, wet climate and its unmodified bright colours have not been fatal to it, and practically it is one of our wild birds. The large capercailzie has also been successfully introduced from Norway. Small birds would probably become naturalized much more readily than large ones ; they are volatile, and can more quickly find suitable feeding-grounds, and safe roosting and nesting places ; their food is also more abundant and easily found ; their small size, which renders them inconspicuous, gives them safety ; and, finally, they are very much more adaptive than large birds.

It is not at all probable that the red-legged partridge will ever drive out our own bird, a contingency which some have feared. That would be a misfortune, for we do not wish to change one bird for another, or to lose any species we now possess, but to have a greater variety. We are better off with two partridges than we were with one, even if the invader does not afford such good sport nor such delicate eating. They exist side by side, and compete with each other ; but such competition is not necessarily destructive to either. On the contrary, it acts and reacts healthily and to the improvement of both. It is a fact that in small islands, very far removed from the mainland, where the animals have been exempt from all foreign competition—that is, from the competition of casual colonists—when it does come

it proves, in many cases, fatal to them. Fortunately, this country's large size and nearness to the mainland has prevented any such fatal crystallization of its organisms as we see in islands like St. Helena. That any English species would be exterminated by foreign competition is extremely unlikely : whether we introduce exotic birds or not, the only losses we shall have to deplore in the future will, like those of the past, be directly due to our own insensate action in slaying every rare and beautiful thing with powder and shot. From the introduction of exotic species nothing is to be feared, but much to be hoped.

There is another point which should not be overlooked. It has after all become a mere fiction to say that *all* places are occupied. Nature's nice order has been destroyed, and her kingdom thrown into the utmost confusion ; our action tends to maintain the disorderly condition, while she is perpetually working against us to re-establish order. When she multiplies some common, little-regarded species to occupy a place left vacant by an artificially exterminated kind, the species called in as a mere stop-gap, as it were, is one not specially adapted in structure and instincts to a particular mode of life, and consequently cannot fully and effectually occupy the ground into which it has been permitted to enter. To speak in metaphor, it enters merely as caretaker or ignorant and improvident steward in the absence of the rightful owner. Again, some of our ornamental species, which are fast diminishing, are fitted from their peculiar structure and life habits to occupy places in Nature which no other kinds, however plastic they may be, can even partially fill. The wryneck and the woodpecker may be mentioned ; and a still better instance is afforded by the small, gem-like kingfisher—the only English bird which can properly be described as gem-like. When the goldfinch goes—and we know that he is going rapidly—other coarser fringilline birds, without the melody, brightness, and charm of the goldfinch—sparrow and bunting—come in, and in some rough fashion supply its place ; but when the kingfisher disappears, an important place is left absolutely vacant, for in this case there is no coarser bird of homely plumage with the fishing instinct to seize upon it. Here, then, is an excellent opportunity for an experiment. In the temperate regions of the earth there are many fine kingfishers to select from ; some are resident in countries colder than England, and are consequently very hardy ;

and in some cases the rivers and streams they frequent are exceedingly poor in fish. Some of them are very beautiful, and they vary in size from birds no larger than a sparrow to others as large as a pigeon.

Anglers might raise the cry that they require all the finny inhabitants of our waters for their own sport. It is scarcely necessary to go as deeply into the subject as mathematical-minded Mudie did to show that Nature's lavishness in the production of life would make such a contention unreasonable. He demonstrated that if all the fishes hatched were to live their full term, in twenty-four years their productive power would convert into fish (200 to the solid foot) as much matter as there is contained in the whole solar system—sun, planets and satellites! An "abundantly startling" result, as he says; but it should be observed that many of the minor planets, discovered since his time, are not included in the calculation, while the comets were left out altogether. This was just as well, perhaps, since, according to current theories on celestial subjects, it would take half a million, or some such very large number, of cubic miles of the exceedingly tenuous stuff composing a comet to furnish solid matter sufficient to represent even a single decent-sized grayling. To be well within the mark, ninety-nine out of every hundred fishes hatched *must* somehow perish during that stage when they are nothing but suitable morsels for the kingfisher, to be swallowed entire; and a portion of all this wasted food might very well go to sustain a few species, which would be beautiful ornaments of the water-side, and a perpetual delight to all lovers of rural nature, including anglers. It may be remarked in passing, that the waste of food, in the present disorganized state of nature, is not only in our streams.

The introduction of one or more of these lovely foreign kingfishers would not certainly have the effect of hastening the decline of our native species; but indirectly it might bring about a contrary result—a subject to be touched on at the end of this paper. Practical naturalists may say that kingfishers would be far more difficult to procure than other birds, and that it would be almost impossible to convey them to England. That is a question it would be premature to discuss now; but if the attempt should ever be made, the difficulties would not perhaps be found insuperable. In all countries one hears of certain species of birds that they invariably die in captivity; but when

the matter is closely looked into, one usually finds that improper treatment and not loss of liberty is the cause of death. Unquestionably it would be much more difficult to keep a king-fisher alive and healthy during a long sea-voyage than a common seed-eating bird ; but the same may be said of woodpeckers, cuckoos, warblers, and, in fact, of any species that subsists in a state of nature on a particular kind of animal food. Still, when we find that even the excessively volatile humming-bird, which subsists on the minutest insects and the nectar of flowers, and seems to require unlimited space for the exercise of its energies, can be successfully kept confined for long periods and conveyed to distant countries, one would imagine that it would be hard to set a limit to what might be done in this direction. We do not want hard-billed birds only. We require in the first place variety ; and, secondly, that every species introduced, when not of a type unlike any native kind, as in the case of the pheasant, shall be superior in beauty, melody, or some other quality, to its British representative, or to the species which comes nearest to it in structure and habits. Thus, suppose that the introduction of a pigeon should be desired. We know that in all temperate regions these birds vary as little in colour and markings as they do in form ; but in the vocal powers of different species there is great diversity ; and the main objects would therefore be to secure a bird which would be an improvement in this respect on the native kinds. There are doves belonging to the same genus as that dismal croaker the wood-pigeon, that have exceedingly good voices, in which the peculiar mournful dove-melody has reached its highest perfection—weird and passionate strains, surging and ebbing, and startling the hearer with their mysterious resemblance to human tones. Or a Zenaida might be preferred for its tender lament, so wild and exquisitely modulated, like sobs etherialized and set to music, and passing away in sigh-like sounds that seem to mimic the aerial voices of the wind.

When considering the character of our bird population with a view to its improvement, one cannot but think much, and with a feeling almost of dismay, of the excessive abundance of the sparrow. A systematic persecution of this bird would probably only serve to make matters worse, since its continued increase is not the cause but an effect of a corresponding decrease in other more useful and attractive species ; and if Nature is to have her way at all there must be birds ; and besides, no bird-lover has

any wish to see such a thing attempted. The sparrow has his good points, if we are to judge him as we find him, without allowing what the Australians and Americans say of him to prejudice our minds. Possibly in those distant countries he may be altogether bad, resembling, in this respect, some of the emigrants of our own species, who, when they go abroad, leave their whole stock of morality at home. Even with us Miss Ormerod is exceedingly bitter against him, and desires nothing less than his complete extirpation ; but it is possible that this lady's zeal may not be according to knowledge, that she may not know a sparrow quite so well as she knows a fly. At all events, the ornithologist finds it hard to believe that so bad an insect-catcher is really causing the extinction of any exclusively insectivorous species. On her own very high authority we know that the insect supply is not diminishing, that the injurious kinds alone are able to inflict an annual loss equal to £10,000,000 on the British farmer. To put aside this controversial matter : the sparrow with all his faults is a pleasant merry little fellow ; in many towns he is the sole representative of wild bird life, and is therefore a great deal to us—especially in this great city, in which he most abounds, and where at every quiet interval his blithe chirruping comes to us like a sound of subdued and happy laughter. In London itself this merriment of Nature never irritates ; it is so much finer and more aerial in character than the gross jarring noises of the street, that it is a relief to listen to it, and it is like melody. In the quiet suburbs it sounds much louder and without intermission. And going further afield, in woods, gardens, hedges, hamlets, towns—everywhere there is the same running, rippling sound of the omnipresent sparrow, and it becomes monotonous at last. We have too much of the sparrow. But we are to blame for that. He is the unskilled worker that Nature has called in to do the work of skilled hands, which we have foolishly turned away. He is willing enough to take it all on himself ; his energy is great ; he bungles away without ceasing ; and being one of a joyous temperament, he whistles and sings in his tuneless fashion at his work, until, like the grasshopper of Ecclesiastes, he becomes a burden. For how tiring are the sight and sound of grasshoppers when one journeys many miles and sees them incessantly rising like a sounding cloud before his horse, and hears their shrill notes all day from the wayside ! Yet how pleasant to listen to their minstrelsy in the green summer foliage, where they are not too

abundant ! We can have too much of anything, however charming it may be in itself. Those who live where scores of humming-birds are perpetually dancing about the garden flowers find that the eye grows weary of seeing the daintiest forms and brightest colours and liveliest motions that birds exhibit. We are told that Edward the Confessor grew so sick of the incessant singing of nightingales in the forest of Havering-at-Bower that he prayed to Heaven to silence their music ; whereupon the birds promptly took their departure, and returned no more to that forest until after the king's death. The sparrow is not so sensitive as the legendary nightingales, and is not to be got rid of in this easy manner. He is amenable only to a rougher kind of persuasion ; and it would be impossible to devise a more effectual method of lessening his predominance than that which Nature teaches—namely, to subject him to the competition of other and better species. He is well equipped for the struggle—hardy, pugnacious, numerous, and in possession. He would not be in possession and so predominant if he had not these qualities, and great pliability of instinct and readiness to seize on vacant places. Nevertheless, even with the sturdy sparrow a very small thing might turn the scale, particularly if we were standing by and putting a little artificial pressure on one side of the balance ; for it must be borne in mind that the very extent and diversity of the ground he occupies is a proof that he does not occupy it effectually, and that his position is not too strong to be shaken. It is not probable that our action in assisting one side against the other would go far in its results ; still, a little might be done. There are gardens and grounds in the suburbs of London where sparrows are not abundant, and are shyer than the birds of other species, and this result has been brought about by means of a little judicious persecution. Shooting is a bad plan, even with an air-gun ; its effects are seen by all the birds, for they see more from their green hiding-places than we imagine, and it creates a general alarm among them. Those who wish to give the other birds a chance will only defeat their own object by shooting the sparrows. A much better plan for those who are able to practise it prudently is to take their nests, which are more exposed to sight than those of other birds ; but they should be taken after the full complement of eggs have been laid, and only at night, so that other birds shall not witness the robbery and fear for their own treasures. Mr. Henry George, in that book of his which has been the delight of so many millions of rational

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souls, advocates the destruction of all the sharks and other large rapacious fishes, after which, he says, the ocean can be stocked with salmon, which would secure an unlimited supply of good wholesome food for the human race. No such high-handed measures are advocated here with regard to the sparrow. Knowledge of Nature makes us conservative. It is so very easy to say, "Kill the sparrow, or shark, or magpie, or whatever it is, and then everything will be right." But there are more things in Nature than are dreamt of in the philosophy of the class of reformers represented by the gamekeeper (and his master), Miss Ormerod, and Mr. Henry George. Let him by all means kill the sharks, but he will not conquer Nature in that way : she will make more sharks out of something else—possibly out of the very salmon on which he proposes to regale his hungry disciples. To go into details is not the present writer's purpose ; and to finish with this part of the subject, it is sufficient to add that in the very wide and varied field occupied by the sparrow, in that rough ineffectual manner possible to a species having no special and highly perfected feeding instincts, there is room for the introduction of scores of competitors, every one of which should be better adapted than the sparrow to find a subsistence at that point or that particular part of the field where the two would come into rivalry ; and every species introduced should also possess some quality which would make it, from the æsthetic point of view, a valuable addition to our bird life. This would be no war of violence, and no contravention of Nature's ordinances, but, on the contrary, a return to her safe, healthy, and far-reaching methods.

There is one objection some may make to the scheme suggested here which must be noticed. It may be said that even if exotic species able to thrive in our country were introduced there would be no result ; for these strangers to our groves would all eventually meet with the same fate as our rarer species and casual visitors. That is to say, they would be shot. There is no doubt that the amateur naturalist has been a curse to this country for the last half century, that it is owing to the "cupidity of the cabinet"—as old Robert Mudie has it—that many of our finer species are exceedingly rare, while others are disappearing altogether. But it is surely not too soon to look for a change for the better in this direction. Half a century ago, when the few remaining great bustards in this country were being done to death, it was suddenly remembered by

naturalists that in their eagerness to possess examples of the bird (in the skin) they had neglected to make themselves acquainted with its customs when alive. Its habits were hardly better known than those of the dodo and solitaire. The reflection came too late, in so far as the habits of the bird in this country are concerned ; but unhappily the lesson was not then taken to heart, and other fine species have since gone the way of the great bustard. But now that we have so clearly seen the disastrous effects of this method of "studying ornithology," which is not in harmony with our humane civilization, it is to be hoped that a better method will be adopted—that "finer way" which Thoreau found and put aside his fowling-piece to practise. There can be no doubt that the desire for such an improvement is now becoming very general, that a kindlier feeling for animal, and especially bird, life is growing up among us, and there are signs that it is even beginning to have some appreciable effect. The fashion of wearing birds is regarded by most men with pain and reprobation ; and it is possible that before long it will be thought that there is not much difference between the action of the woman who buys tanagers and orioles to adorn her person, and that of the man who kills the bittern, hoopoe, waxwing, and ouzel to enrich his private collection.

A few words on the latest attempt which has been made to naturalize an exotic bird in England will not seem out of place here. About eight years ago a gentleman in Essex introduced the rufous tinamou—a handsome game bird nearly as large as a fowl—into his estate. Up till the present time, or till quite recently, these birds have bred every year, and at one time they had increased considerably and scattered about the neighbourhood. When it began to increase, the neighbouring proprietors and sportsmen generally were asked not to shoot it, but to give it a chance, and there is reason to believe that they have helped to protect it, and have taken a great interest in the experiment. Whatever the ultimate result may be, the partial success attained during these few years is decidedly encouraging, and that for more reasons than one. In the first place, the bird was badly chosen for such an experiment. It belongs to the pampas of La Plata, to which it is restricted, and where it enjoys a dry bright climate, and lives concealed in the tall close-growing indigenous grasses. The conditions of its habitat are therefore widely different from those of Essex, or of any part of England ;

and, besides, it has a peculiar organization, for it happens to be one of those animals of ancient types of which a few species still survive in South America. That so unpromising a subject as this large archaic tinamou should be able to maintain its existence in this country, even for a very few years, encourages one to believe that with better chosen-species, more highly organised, and with more pliant habits, such as the hazel hen of Europe for a game bird, success would be almost certain. Another circumstance connected with the attempted introduction of this unsuitable bird, even of more promise than the mere fact of the partial success achieved, is the great interest the experiment has excited, not only among naturalists throughout the country, but also among landlords and sportsmen down in Essex, where the bird was not regarded merely as fair game to be bagged, or as a curiosity to be shot for the collector's cabinet, but was allowed to fight its own fight without counting man among its enemies. And it is to be expected that the same self-restraint and spirit of fairness and intelligent desire to see a favourable result would be shown everywhere, if exotic species were to be largely introduced, and breeding-centres established in suitable places throughout the country. When it once became known that individuals were doing this thing, giving their time and best efforts, and at considerable expense, and not for their own selfish gratification, but for the general good, and to make the country more delightful to all lovers of rural sights and sounds, there would be no opposition, but on the contrary every assistance, since all would wish success to such an enterprise. Even the most enthusiastic collector would refrain from lifting a weapon against the new feathered guests from distant lands ; and if by any chance an example of one should get into his hands he would be ashamed to exhibit it.

The addition of new beautiful species to our avifauna would probably not be the only, nor even the principal, benefit we should derive from the carrying out of the scheme here suggested. The reflex effect of the knowledge all would possess that such an experiment was being conducted, and that its chief object was to repair the damage that has been done, would be wholly beneficial, since it would enhance the value in our eyes of our remaining native rare and beautiful species. A large number of our finer birds are annually shot by those who know that they are doing a great wrong—that if their transgression is not punishable by law it is really not less grave than that of the person

who maliciously barks a shade tree in a park or public garden—but who excuse their action by saying that such birds must eventually get shot, and that those who first see them might as well have the benefit. The presence of even a small number of exotic species in our woods and groves would no doubt give rise to a better condition of things ; it would attract public attention to the subject ; for the birds that delight us with their beauty and melody should be for the public, and not for the few barbarians engaged in exterminating them ; and the "collector" would find it best to abandon his evil practices when it once began to be generally asked, If we can spare the rare lovely birds brought hither at great expense from China or Patagonia, can we not also spare our own kingfisher, and the golden oriole, and the hoopoe, that comes to us annually from Africa to breed, but is not permitted to breed, and many other equally beautiful and interesting species ?

After a quarter of a century, Pallas's sand-grouse have reappeared in this country. In this chance visitor we have a very beautiful and valuable game bird brought by Nature herself to us and widely distributed over the country. The excessively wet summer last year has probably prevented it from breeding, except in a few instances ; but many practical naturalists still confidently believe that these hardy, prolific and strong-winged birds that have wandered so far will yet become naturalized in England, if there is no repetition of the barbarous persecution of twenty-five years ago. It is a pleasure to note that much has been and is being done to protect this "new game bird," and that we are witnessing on a large scale those hopeful signs of an improved feeling of which mention has been made. It does not then seem too much to say that the "centres of personal influence" are increasing in number and strength as time progresses, and that they will eventually give us something better than any Wild Birds Protection Act, however stringent it may be—an unwritten law which will make the wanton destruction of bird life an offence to the majority, and which will give us a "better friendship" with the beautiful children of air.

W. H. HUDSON.

The Reproach of Annesley.

BY MAXWELL GRAY.

AUTHOR OF "THE SILENCE OF DEAN MAITLAND."

"Give me the man that is not passion's slave."



PART V.—CHAPTER II.

BY THE HEARTH.

JOSHUA BAKER received as guerdon for his news an unexpected five shillings from Mrs. Rickman and an expected scolding from Ruth, for he had not only wasted hours in Medington, but had evidently been in a skirmish, of which he bore the proof in rent garments.

"Whatever call had ye for to go fighting when you knowed Mr. Rickman was in?" his wife asked.

"Two or dree was laying about them," he explained, "and I thought I med so well jine in," an explanation that did not satisfy Ruth, whose feminine mind had not room in it to admit the obvious fact that no sensible man can keep still when there is good fighting to be had for nothing. But these confidences took place after the visitors had left the cottage, which they very quickly did, walking as lightly along as if the dry dead leaves, lying thickly in their path, were air-borne cloudlets.

"I suppose it is true, Alice," said Mrs. Rickman, pausing with a shock of misgiving beneath the sycamores and looking dubiously towards Medington at the crimson western sky, which glowed through the dark elms, the delicate leafless branches and tall trunks of which were traced blackly against the warm colours. Alice laughingly re-assured her, and they hastened up the lane to the Manor, just as one or two liquid stars appeared above its chimneys in the pale green sky.

"It is surprising," Mrs. Rickman continued, "that your uncle and I should have two such clever children. To be sure we had only two."

"Quality is better than quantity," replied Alice, wondering if Mrs. Rickman thought that Gervase and Sibyl inherited the concentrated power of a baker's-dozen of children.

"I believe that Sibyl is writing a book, Alice," Mrs. Rickman said with a mysterious air, as they reached the flight of steps leading into the porch, through the half-open door of which a warm light streamed. "Her father says that she is capable of anything after that last article of hers on compulsory education; though I dare say Gervase gave her all the ideas, if he did not write half of it. And now I should like to see him married to a really nice girl to whom I could be a mother."

"So should I," returned Alice tranquilly; "but I should be jealous of the nice girl, Aunt Jenny; that is, if you were too fond of her."

No sooner had they entered the hall than all the servants came crowding into it, with John Nobbs, the bailiff, and his wife, all eager to proclaim the good tidings; and scarcely had the congratulations and comments subsided, when a carriage drove up to the door, and Mr. Rickman and Sibyl, the latter radiant with excitement, sprang out, and the congratulations began over again; wine was brought, and the new member's health was enthusiastically drunk.

Alice stood a little apart, with Hubert lying at her feet as if studying the scene with interest, and looked on at the animated group with deeply stirred feelings, in which warm affection for her adopted parents and Sibyl predominated. Her lip trembled and tears, which she could not explain, dimmed the figures standing in the blaze of the hearth-fire, dimmed the oak-panelled walls, full of mysterious shadows, the swinging lamp overhead, the glitter of glasses, and the decanter from which Sibyl was pouring the sparkling wine with a face infinitely more sparkling; and the thought came to her that in the happiness of these people, who were so dear to her, she too might find a little gladness. Yet she reproached herself because she was not glad enough, and did not overflow with high spirits like Sibyl, forgetting the difference in their temperaments, and calling herself selfish. But how long would this happiness last? she wondered, thinking of Gervase's insatiable ambition, and the stormy and uncertain career on which he was launched.

She was nearer the door than the others, and the pricking of Hubert's ears called her attention to the rumble of approaching wheels, unheard by the bacchanalian group before the hearth, and so it happened that she went to the door and opened it just as Gervase's carriage drew up, and the first thing he saw was her figure in the arched doorway traced upon the glowing light from within, with the watchful Hubert by her side, decked with his colours.

It was the sweetest moment in the day to him ; in a moment he had cleared the steps, and was standing with both hands clasped in Alice's, receiving her cordial greeting, "Dear Gervase, I am glad ! I think we have all lost our senses with pleasure."

She was not surprised that his hands trembled as she held them, or that they retained their pressure long after she had relaxed hers, or that he did not speak for some moments in answer to the congratulations showered upon him. He was tired and excited, overwrought with the tension of the last few weeks ; no wonder he was not quite himself.

Leaving him to the tender mercies of his family, she went herself to the deserted kitchen and fetched the coffee which had been made ready for him, and administered it before any one else had time to think of it, with the observation that even heroes are mortal.

"One might think," observed the hero, after gratefully taking the coffee, "that nobody ever got into Parliament before. As the Scotch nurse said to the dying woman, 'Hech, hizzie, dinna mak such a stour, ye're nae the first to dee.' Why even Hubert condescends to notice me."

"Since mounting your colours he considers himself a politician," Alice replied ; but she was not sure that Hubert's glance was of an entirely friendly nature, for though he went up to receive the offered pat on the head with his usual stateliness, the white of his eyes was distinctly visible.

A reaction is inevitable after excitement. The family party, after dinner a couple of hours later, was unusually quiet. They were all in the white drawing-room, one window of which was uncurtained and showed the quiet night sky, moonless but throbbing with the pale brilliance of stars, and occasionally irradiated by the flashing trail of a meteor. Alice, seated at the piano, could see through this window, the very window in which she was sitting when Edward Annesley, himself a meteor flashing through the peaceful star-light of her youth, first saw her. She

was playing soft and dreamy music of her own imagining, as she so often did when seeking to express her feelings ; she seemed to be drawing the inspiration for her music from those tranquil star-worlds towards which her face was turned. Sibyl was reclining in a chair, doing nothing but listen to Alice and stroke the cat upon her knee, to the anger of Hubert, who was observing puss with one eye, as he lay at his mistress's feet with his muzzle on his fore-paws. Mr. Rickman slept audibly in his chair on one side of the hearth with a newspaper folded on his knee, Mrs. Rickman slumbered peacefully in her chair on the other side of the hearth ; the future ruler of England, if not the world, appeared to be following his parents' example in the corner of a sofa, but though his eyes seemed to be closed they were in reality as watchful as Hubert's, and were aware of every slight movement of Alice, as she swayed over her instrument, making music and looking with an earnest gaze at the starry sky. Every curve in the graceful form traced against the comparative darkness of window and sky, every change in her thoughtful face, and every note that answered the touch of her slender skilful fingers, stirred the depths of his heart with an intensity that was akin to pain. She was not happy, that was too evident : and yet it was long since that evening on the down when he uttered those two fateful words, "Quite right ;" summer had faded and bloomed and faded again till the fourth winter from that summer was upon them. Yet in all that time he had found no change in the sadness which then settled upon her, nor seen anything to warrant the indulgence of his hopes. And in all that time Alice had scarcely seen Edward Annesley.

When the Annesleys chanced to be at Gledesworth it happened that Alice was not at Arden ; she was more often away from home than in former days. Had it gone so hard with her ? Gervase wondered, did she really care so much for that "good-looking fool "? or was her sadness only the vague unrest of a woman the promise of whose youth is unfulfilled ? Sibyl had not that look of deep inward sorrow.

While he was thus observing her with a yearning gaze, she turned her head from the window and looked towards the hearth, meeting his eye, and smiled a smile of perfect confidence and affection, which transfigured her face and stirred him with a vague unspeakable trouble.

He left his place and drew a chair to the piano, on which she

continued to play. "I thought I had caught you napping for once, Gervase," she said.

"You will never do that," Sibyl said, looking up from the cat she was petting and teasing; "he is the proverbial weasel. I mean to hide in his room some night to see if he ever really sleeps."

"The world," he replied, "belongs to the man who can wake longest. 'Before her gate (*i.e.* Honour's) high God did sweat ordain And wakeful watches ever to abide.' Am I quoting rightly, Sibyl?"

There arose a dispute about the quotation, the music died away, and Sibyl was so provokingly confident that the lines occurred in a sonnet, while Alice was as firmly convinced that they belonged to the Faerie Queene, that Alice rose and left the room for the purpose of fetching Spenser from his bookshelf in proof.

"People ought never to be in earnest after dinner, especially when everybody is tired," said Sibyl, petulantly, upsetting the cat and taking Alice's place at the piano; "earnestness is Alice's besetting sin, and I believe it is ruining her digestion."

Sibyl played in her spasmodic fashion snatches from different composers, for she had not Alice's graceful gift of transmuting her own fancies into music as they arose; her parents slept on, and Gervase gradually, after a fashion of his own, got himself from a photograph book, to a picture on the wall, and thence to a piece of bric-a-brac, until he reached the doorway, through which he silently disappeared. Thus when Alice, having verified the quotation, issued from the bookroom to the hall with her heavy volume, she found Gervase standing before the hearth, gazing thoughtfully into the fire, which was getting low.

When she appeared, he kicked a log into place, thus stirring the decaying embers, and making some fresh wood kindle.

"Come," he said, pointing to a carved oak settle; "it is nice here, quite *gemüthlich*, and we can talk at our ease."

Alice wondered that a man who had had such a surfeit of talk during the last few weeks did not take the opportunity of enjoying a little silence, but took her place on the settle, laying the great book on the table, and told him about the Spenserian quotation, while he knelt on one knee before the hearth and plied the bellows, with the air of a man whose fate depended upon rousing a crackling flame from the logs.

At last he made a noble fire, the brightness of which leapt up into the dark beams of the ceiling, danced airily over the black panels, playing at hide and seek with the lurking shadows

in them, and quite overpowering the light of the swinging lamp. Then he rose, and stood leaning against the carved chimney jamb, and looking down into Alice's face, which was irradiated by the brilliant blaze, saying nothing.

She spoke of the times when their favourite winter sport was making the hall-fire burn, and of their rivalries and quarrels over the bellows.

"Sometimes," she said, "I think the pleasantest thing in life is to remember what one did as a child. But none of us could make such a fire as you could. It is a pity," she concluded, "a really first-rate career as a stoker has been marred for the sake of—"

"An indifferent one in politics," he added. "But no, Alice, it will not be indifferent, it will and must be brilliant, and I shall owe it to you if it is."

"To me? Are you dreaming, Gervase?"

"No; I am speaking sober truth. No one has nursed my ambition and cherished and developed my energies as you have, Alice. You always believed in me; you have been my inspiration; but for you I should have dared little and done less. You would never dream what you are to me, dearest."

His voice quivered a little and lost its usual energetic ring; it touched her heart and made her hesitate to reply. "It is kind of you to say that," she faltered at last, "I have always hoped to be a good sister to you, next to Sibyl. You have been more than brother to me."

"I *am* more than brother," he replied, in his fuller tones; then he paused a moment. "Alice," he continued, "this has been a fortunate day for me, marking my first step in public life; I have, as you know, a little superstition about lucky days, and I hope this may prove fortunate in another sense. Public life, power, success, all these do not fill a man's life. There are deeper things that touch him nearer home, that are the foundation upon which he builds the superstructure of active life. A happy domestic centre is a necessity to one who is to do good work in the world. Nothing is any good to a man whose heart is hollowed out by unsatisfied yearnings and vain hopes."

Her face grew graver as she listened to the deepening vibrations in the mellow voice, which was not invariably mellow, but sometimes harsh; and her heart ached. She knew what was coming; the old trouble which she thought for ever at rest, was starting afresh into life. He was very dear to her, dearer than she thought, and the prospect of having to

wound him in an hour so happy, and casting such a cloud over his first triumph, was inexpressibly painful. She could not meet his gaze ; she averted her head and watched the firelight playing over a panel and making the suit of armour in front of it stand out grim and full of hostile suggestion. Hubert sat up with his head just above her knee, and a look of sympathy in his soft dark eyes. "The dog at least is faithful and true," shot across her mind with no apparent relevance ; for whom did she suspect of falsehood ?

"Oh, Gervase !" she exclaimed, "I did so trust in your brotherhood ! I thought you had kept your promise."

"I did keep it till now—and at such a cost ! Can you think what it must be to live in perpetual warfare with oneself? To crush the best and dearest feelings ? Oh, Alice ! have I not tried all these years ? Have I not stood by in silence and seen others preferred ? Did I not see your trouble, and yet was silent ? Did I ever by word or look betray what I could not conquer ? I have often said that will can conquer everything, and it is true. But something has conquered me, it is stronger than even my strong will. And unless you can give me some hope, Alice, nothing will ever be any good to me."

"If I had but foreseen this," she replied, "I would have gone away ; I would never have stayed near you to encourage false hopes."

"Not false ; they *must* realize themselves, being so strong and invincible," he returned in a tone that made her tremble ; for it recalled his passionate assertion on the downs so long ago that he would win her in spite of herself. And all things seemed to conspire that he should win her. A remorseless fate seemed to be slowly hedging her in and driving her to bay ; her life was barren and desolate, her will in comparison with that of Gervase was as silk to iron. He had a secret mastery over her which sometimes repelled her when she felt most tenderly towards him, for she was not one of those singularly-constituted women who like, or profess to like, to have a master ; her pride and self-respect revolted at the notion of subjection. Whenever she was conscious of this mastery, her heart turned from him, and she feared him and dreaded her own weakness.

Instantly he was aware of the change his words produced in her, and knew he had made a false step, on which he hastened to return ; he saw the proud blood flash to her cheek as she hardened her gaze to meet his.

"It is so hard to have no hope," he added, in a tone that at once disarmed her. "Life is new to you, Alice, fresh interests might still arise for you—in the course of time. I can wait."

She said nothing; but her tears fell. Then he told her how he had tried, and tried in vain to conquer his feelings through all these years, and spoke of the exquisite pain of being so near to her and yet so far off, of the difficulty of the part he had had to play, of seeing her suffer and being impotent to help her. He spoke of their years of affectionate intercourse, of his parents' wishes, and of the sorrow they would feel if they had to part with her. He hinted that it was impossible during the hey-day of youth to live always in the past, that it was well sometimes to turn down a leaf for ever in the book of life, and begin afresh with new aims and hopes. Life was full of duty and responsibility, and to make a fellow-creature happy was no mean aim.

She believed every word he said, and her heart bled for him. He believed most of it himself; for when people are in the habit of manipulating statements of facts to suit their own purposes, the distinction between the actual and the desirable is apt to grow very shadowy, and to deliver a round unvarnished tale becomes a Herculean labour of the very first magnitude.

But she could only tell him, as gently as possible, that his hopes were vain; and then they were interrupted.

Gervase was not sorry for the interruption. He thought enough had been said for the time, and was as satisfied as it is possible for a man who is very much in love to be on receiving a direct refusal. This refusal was very different from the first; all the circumstances in Alice's life were now different and more in his favour. When they went upstairs, he sat very comfortably before the blaze of the drawing-room fire, feeling that things were advancing, however slowly. Chance had again set Alice against the background of the starlit sky. He looked at her pale and troubled face, and saw a falling star shoot across the heavens behind her at the very moment when his heart was uttering the passionate wish of his life. The star made him almost certain of success; he asked Sibyl if she had seen it and remembered to wish, and set Mr. Rickman off upon one of his interminable monologues on shooting-stars and the various superstitions and fancies

connected with them, thus giving himself leisure to be silent and think in peace, and Alice space to recover from her perturbation unobserved.

Alice sat long by her fire that night, instead of going to bed ; she was too much stirred to sleep, and was a prey to a ceaseless whirl of thoughts over which predominated the foreboding that she would ultimately marry Gervase in spite of herself. She thought of the years she had spent under that roof, of the deep ineradicable feelings which were twined about the familiar trees, gables and garden plots of Arden. The very figures in the carved oak were old and dear friends ; no place could ever wear the same homelike face for her. She had always admired Gervase's talents, done homage to the energy of his character, and felt the charm of his society. But in the last year or two he had gradually come to fill a larger space in her life. A vague unspoken something had arisen between herself and Sibyl since the day when each read the other's secret, the complete confidence of their early friendship was broken by the reticence that discovery created on each side, though their affection was not diminished. At the same time the bitter sorrow through which Alice had passed created a stronger need for the healing of affectionate intimacy, and she unconsciously threw herself more and more on Gervase's friendship.

When a man tells a woman of his struggles and difficulties, it is not only a sign that he has a very deep regard for her, but it is the surest way of winning her heart. This Gervase knew. He believed that Othello would have sighed in vain, but for the happy instinct which made him relate the perilous adventures which so stirred Desdemona's fancy and touched her heart ; in which case she might have escaped suffocation and lived to a green old age ; while but for similar narratives on the part of Æneas, Dido of Carthage would never have mounted the famous pyre. Therefore he fell into the habit of confiding his ambitions, aims and struggles to Alice—with a certain reserve, of course ; for it is not to be supposed that Desdemona was in a position to compile a complete biography of Othello, while Dido was very far from knowing the whole history of Æneas ; it is even possible that both these warriors, like Göthe, may have mingled a little *Dichtung* with the *Wahrheit* out of their lives, it is certain that Gervase was far too clever not to do so. Thus Gervase had gradually become

dearer to Alice ; he made her life sufferable in the heavy sorrow which had desolated it.

The pale resolute face, alive with intellect and energy, and spiritualized by the worthiest passion he had known ; the slight but strong figure, imposing though small, haunted her, and his voice, mellowed and deepened by feeling, rang in her ears. Most great men have been small, she remembered, and only men with voices of a certain power can directly influence democratic communities. Ought she to mar the splendid career before him for the sake of her own feelings ? What had she to live for but the welfare of that family ?

Then there came a sudden warmth about her heart and she seemed to see the face of Edward Annesley, aglow with the "sweet and sudden passion of youth," as she had first seen it with a kind of passionate surprise, when she looked up from her spring flowers and felt the spring-time of life stirred within her.

She could never forget that ; even the crime which set their lives asunder could not alienate the love which was kindled in the days of innocence. It would be a sin to marry one man when she felt this for another.

CHAPTER III.

SIBYL.

Next morning the new member for Medington, who only allowed himself the solace of one night at Arden in recompense for the labours of the few weeks preceding his election, left early and did not see Alice again for some time, except occasionally in the presence of others.

Although Parliament was prorogued until February, he had a great deal of political business on hand that winter ; his fluent and flashy rhetoric being in great request at one or two bye-elections and club-meetings, whither he went at the instance of the ex-Minister and party chief to whom Mrs. Walter Annesley had introduced him, and who wished to make all the possible use of so keen and delicate an instrument as that he had lighted upon in Gervase Rickman.

But Gervase wrote frequently to Alice ; charming letters, full of pungent reflections on the scenes and men which passed before

him, full of personal confidences and kindly jests and not too affectionate. He knew better than to reopen the question of marriage, and only occasionally alluded to hopes which lay in the future, and feelings which might never be gratified. He had made the important step of prevailing on her to entertain the idea of marrying him, he wisely left that idea to germinate silently within her mind. Impulsive, warm-hearted Sibyl had often been laughed at as a child for digging up her flower-seeds to see how they were growing ; but Gervase's seeds had always been left undisturbed beneath the dark mould to fulfil their inevitable destiny, and at the same time had enjoyed more systematic watering and weeding than Sibyl's.

Mrs. Rickman now spoke to Alice of her wishes, which, of course, were moulded on her son's, and even Mr. Rickman withdrew his mind from the contemplation of scientific facts and the formulating of all sorts of theories for a brief space, to tell Alice how happy she would make the evening of his life if she would marry his only son. Alice assured them that she would certainly marry no one else, and would not leave them unless they drove her forth on the advent of a more suitable daughter-in-law. Even Mrs. Walter Annesley arrayed herself on Gervase's side, and went so far as to hint to Alice that moral suttee could scarcely be expected even of a young woman who might have married her son, especially when there was a chance of sharing and stimulating a career so brilliant as that of Gervase promised to be. A sort of paralysis of the will crept upon Alice under all this ; she felt the iron power of a destiny which seemed to be closing her in on every side, and all she could do was to pray for strength to do what would work for the happiness of others.

Then something occurred which powerfully stimulated her halting purpose.

The Annesleys did not return to Gledesworth after the winter abroad which Edward had proposed as a temporary change. Their experience of living at Coventry in a country-house was too grey when contrasted with the vivid glow of Continental travel (not then so common as now) ; the girls acquired the habits of English Bedouins, and were seized by the strange fascination of a wealthy nomadic existence in those sunny countries which not only teem with historic association, but are the homes of art. Therefore they only returned to England for an occasional visit to London.

But Edward Annesley made it a duty to visit Gledesworth

from time to time and see personally into the affairs of the property, though he was not recognized by the landed gentry, or either asked or permitted to perform any of those genial public duties which belong to that class. The cloud upon his name grew darker with time, but he continued to maintain that time would finally dissipate it. His manner changed totally during this period ; he became reserved, cold, taciturn and gloomy. All this did not tend to soften his extremely painful position among his brother-officers, who did not recognize his existence more than they were obliged by their unwritten code of etiquette. His next brother, Wilfrid, also a military man, a Royal Engineer, implored him to leave the service for his own sake, but in vain. He replied that the army was his chosen profession, and that he intended to stick to his colours and serve his country while he could ; he was not to be driven away by the clatter of a few venomous tongues, whose venom he would justify by yielding. Then he invented a gun, and was not without hope that it would one day be adopted by the authorities. At this time he looked as grim and aggressive as his own gun.

Yet there was one in whose presence his face brightened and his tongue was unloosed, and that one was Sibyl Rickman. She sometimes visited the Annesleys in their foreign haunts, and Edward usually made his visits coincide with hers. When he paid his brief visits to Gledesworth he always went to the Manor, and whether by chance or purpose, it often befell that Sibyl was at home and Alice absent at these times. One day Gervase suddenly told him that he could not have his sister's affections trifled with any longer, and that in fact if he had no intentions he must be off at once. Edward was indignant at the supposition that Sibyl's affections had been touched, much less trifled with ; but Gervase pointed out to him that the world's opinion was on his side, and that Paul Annesley was not the only person to suppose him to be smitten with Sibyl at his first visit to the Manor ; that he had been taken in himself, and so undoubtedly had Sibyl. Gervase had always supposed, he said, that having thoughtlessly used Sibyl as a blind before Paul's death, Edward's subsequent attentions had been deliberate, else he would never for a moment have tolerated them.

From hot indignation Edward passed to cool reflection, and from hoping that Sibyl had never thought seriously of him, he proceeded to the notion that to win such a heart as hers would make life liveable once more. Gervase, with his accustomed

discretion, had left him to digest these unwelcome observations the moment he had delivered himself of them, rightly divining that he had cast his handful of seed in a good soil.

Edward had from the first recognized Sibyl's charm and appreciated her guileless character and bright wit, and the more he thought of her the better he liked her, and the more he pondered, by the light of memory, on Gervase's hints as to her probable view of the relations between them, the more plausible did they appear to him. It was but just to Wilfrid to marry before the latter had built any decided expectations on his celibacy.

All good men like the idea of marriage in the abstract, it is only bad fellows who look with a cynical and incredulous eye upon wedded bliss (for which they are obviously unfit); Edward Annesley was no exception to this rule, knowing from his observation of mankind that the human male is vastly improved by being brought into proper subjection and tamed to the female hand.

Therefore with renewed hope he once more set forth in search of a wife.

It was on a cold Christmas Eve, the ponds were frozen and unspoilt by snow; Sibyl, who skated well, had met him more than once on the ice, and his hopes had been stimulated during the courses they had made together hand-in-hand, to the admiration of all beholders; for Sibyl looked so happy and so pretty while skating, that it was enough to make an old man and even an old woman young to look at her.

Alice and Sibyl were busy decorating the church that winter afternoon when Edward Annesley arrived at Arden. He soon made his way to the church and looked into the hoary interior, where the gloom was intensified by the dim ray of a candle or two, and where the air was aromatic with fir and bay, and saw the two girls, with some more young people, intent on hammering up wreaths. He soon joined them and held hammers and handed wreaths about; till Sibyl left them to go to the belfry, where the despotic Raysh had compelled them to keep their material, in search of fresh wreaths. Presently he followed her, unobserved except by Raysh. Alice, at whose bidding Sibyl had gone, growing tired of waiting, after a time went to remonstrate at having to work single-handed. But Raysh, seeing her approach, waved her back from the belfry-door, which stood ajar, with a mysterious air.

"I 'lows there baint hroom for me and you in there," he said ; "coorten," he added, confidentially.

Then the situation became clear to her ; she could see the two figures in the light beyond the crack of the door, talking earnestly and apparently oblivious of everything around them. The evergreens were piled up inconveniently round them, in obedience to the dictum of Raysh ; "I caint hae my church messed up by this yer nonsense," he had grumbled, lamenting the days when he alone adorned the church, and made it look "cheerfuller and more Christmas-like" by sticking a large bough of holly in every pew, till it looked like Birnham wood marching up for devotion instead of retribution.

She had seen Edward and Sibyl skating together the day before, when she drove to the ice to fetch Sibyl home, and had heard people's comments on them with an incredulous ear, but now she was fully enlightened.

She quickly silenced Raysh, and then turned back beneath the dim, cold arches with a singing in her ears, and a fierce, hot surge of passion, which surely could not be that dark and dismal thing, jealousy, in her heart, and applied herself with fierce diligence to nailing up the red-berried holly, taking a perverse pleasure in pricking her hands till they bled, and driving in the nails with an energy that made Raysh use strong language when he took them out again. Never had such strange and bitter feelings possessed her before, she did not know herself, surely her guardian angel would not have known her that day. Does it need but some momentary touch like this, she wondered, to change the current of a character and turn light into darkness ? But a few years ago in that very church she had met the summer dawn with such high resolves and feelings so different.

Her companions spoke to her, and she answered them like one who wanders in sleep ; the dim and darkening church seemed unreal as the architecture of dreams ; its trooping shadows and flickering spots of light oppressed her and added to the confusion which throbbed within and nearly stifled her. Her life seemed to depend on the energy with which she moved and worked ; did she but pause an instant to think, she would be undone. And was it truly Sibyl who awakened such anger and scorn in the heart which loved her ? And was it true that Alice once actually loved that shallow man, who was filling the measure of his faults by proving a trifler, a light of love, and a traitor ?

It was only when she had exhausted her energies and torn her hands in finishing her task that better and more rational feelings came. After all, she mused, might this not be the best thing for both? Sibyl believed in him; who could tell what a purifying and ennobling influence her perfect trust and innocent love might have upon him? Sibyl might still be happy with him, being blind. So she brought herself to think after painful wrestling.

"Sibyl," Edward began without hesitation, when they were alone in the belfry, "we have been friends for a long time, and you are more dear to me every day, and I think—I hope—you care for me—" here he paused, expecting a reply, which naturally was not forthcoming. "Will you marry me?" he added, in his straightforward fashion.

Sibyl had looked up with her usual frank smile, when he entered, and went on unsuspiciously twining her ivy leaves, but when he spoke, her heart gave a great leap, all the blood flashed up into her face, and the belfry seemed to spin round and shake the great bells above her head. Something rose in her throat and choked her; she grew cold all of a sudden and looked with wistful enquiry into his face, which was earnest and eloquent with warm feeling. Then she looked down, and he waited in vain for her answer, thinking hers one of the sweetest faces that was ever seen, and went on to his downright question, to which she immediately answered "No."

"No," he echoed, somewhat taken aback by this plump and plain negative, "and I thought once—that you seemed to care for me."

Sibyl smiled, and he seemed to see Viola again,

"I am all the daughters of my father's house,
And yet—I know not."

"Once," she said, "I was in love with you. When I was a little, naughty girl. You were such a pretty boy and always hit everything you threw stones at. And you didn't mind being teased like poor Paul. You should have asked me then."

"But I had not sense enough then. I know that you believe in me, you told me so once."

"And I will tell you so again if you like to hear it," she replied, in her bright impetuous way.

"Thank you. You are the very sweetest little thing on the face of this perverse earth! But won't you have me?

Somehow it strikes me that we should get on well together and make a pleasant-going sort of couple. You scold so charmingly." Then it was that Edward took her hands and looked down, too confidently, into the sweet face which was tender, sad and playful all at once.

"It strikes me that we shall do nothing of the kind," she replied, withdrawing her hands with some indignation. "You don't love me," she added with a seriousness touched with reproach.

"Indeed I do—"

"No, indeed you don't. You love somebody else. You have loved her for years and will love her for ever. And you *ought* to, for she is the dearest creature in the world."

"But she won't have me."

"Won't she? Try again. Wait. She is worth it."

"No, Sibyl, that chapter is closed. It is quite true that I shall never feel again as I did for her, never. But past is past. One can't live backwards. One has to go on. You and I have always been such friends; let us be more. You might make me happy, and I would try to be good to you."

He had taken her hand and led her forth from the darkening chamber beneath the bells, into the warm crimson glow of the frosty sunset, and now they slowly paced the hard footpath among the graves until they reached the meadow above and beyond the churchyard, where the leafless elms made a fine black tracery on the deep orange sky above them.

"Oh! what tiresome, clumsy, stupid things these men are!" exclaimed Sibyl; "you don't even profess to care for me, you see. Why in the world should you want to marry me, then? You say we are good friends, let us *bide* friends then. A good friend is better than a bad husband, which you would certainly be."

"There is nothing in the world so irritating as a woman," returned Edward, trying hard not to kiss her, and restrained only by innate awe of the womanhood in which this guileless spirit was enshrined. "Just think of the comfortable quarrels we might have. As mere friends, the sphere is limited; conventionalities must be observed."

"Is this a theme for jesting?" asked Sibyl, severely. "Oh I should hate you if I thought you had ceased to love that dear sweet creature! For pity's sake be rational."

"But you began the jesting," he remonstrated, aghast at this charge.

"Well! and I began leaving it off. Good-night. Alice is pricking her sweet fingers with no one to help her."

"Stop, Sibyl, just one word."

Sibyl stopped with an air of resignation. "I am busy, and it's cold," she said plaintively.

"Of course I shall always love her," he said earnestly, "as one loves what is too high and too far-off to reach. But dearest Sibyl —"

"Then don't tease me any more. Who cares to hear other people made love to?"

"But, Sibyl —"

"It should always be done first-hand, and *never* talked about," she added rebukingly.

"But Sibyl —"

"My name is Rickman. I shall never change it. I am married to my pen —"

"But I wish you could marry me, too."

"You would unwish it in a week. Now listen," said Sibyl, stopping on the crisp grass with sudden gravity. "I like you—far too well to marry you. You fancy you care enough for me to make a passable husband, but it is only friendship. In a week's time you will see that I am right. Be true to yourself, then you will be true to others."

The warm glow of the sunset had burnt away to a pale memory, a mist was floating ghost-like from the level meads beneath them, the Christmas moon had just risen and was filling the earth with a tender dreamy radiance. Sibyl's face in the pale blended lights had a new and unexpected beauty; her rich tints were subdued and the lustre of her dark eyes intensified.

What was the secret charm which so irresistibly drew him to her? It was very different from the deep inevitable and inextinguishable feelings which bound him to Alice. Something told him that Sibyl knew him better than he knew himself, her deep liquid eyes seemed to be gazing into the depths of his soul and discovering recesses closed even to him. What was the secret of her power? Was it genius? His brain was full of lyric snatches from the little volume of poems which had just appeared in Sibyl's name, and they had seemed to his not exigent judgment to have the ring of true song, they had further

suggested revelations of Sibyl's own heart. Her earnest glance spoke a thousand unspeakable things, it revealed the guileless soul of a gentle Viola, yet with all its tenderness it scarcely concealed the swift lightnings of a spirit full of mirth. While he gazed, his own spirit began to clear and he saw that she was right. He saw that his feeling for her, though in that moment she had acquired a dearness that she never had before, was not one to justify marriage or forbode a happy union. He saw, too, that deeply as he had pressed his love for Alice down into the lowest hold in his heart, he could not stifle it; above all the disappointment, chagrin and resentment her refusal and want of faith had caused him, and above all more tender and gracious feelings, he had that strong sense of oneness with her, which is only felt once and cannot end. He knew now that the dream Gervase had called into existence was vain, and that the double life with all its cares and joys and perturbations was not for him, since Alice was beyond reach.

"Dear Sibyl," he said, after a pause, "I think you are one of the sweetest creatures God ever made! I will be true to you, at least. And I think we shall be friends all our lives long."

"I think we shall," replied Sibyl, with a little tender smile. Then they clasped hands and parted.

She went slowly back through the chill silver of the aerial moonbeams, her breath visible in the frosty air, and the frozen grass rebounding stiffly from beneath her light steps, and met Alice and the Mertens coming out of the dark church, the deep blackness of which was still emphasized by a few dim lights. The clear evening sky into which pale stars were slowly stealing, the grey church with its steep red roof and massive tower, the village with its red lighted windows, the bare trees all sleeping in the moonshine, the faces looking unearthly in the bluish light, the associations of Christmas Eve which threw a hallowed glory over all, everything seemed sweet and full of unspeakable charm to Sibyl. The hour she had just passed was the flower of all her life, and she was content; her heart was like a sleeping babe, perfect in its deep sweet repose.

She scarcely heard the "good-nights" of the Mertens when they turned in at their gate, but with her hand in Alice's arm walked silently home, her looks communing with the serene clear heavens. Alice was quiet too, but it was with a different quietness. They went into the kitchen to see the mummers acting their primitive play from house to house; but Sibyl did

not enter into the homely jests as usual ; it was as if she had let her spirit pass away with the mystic glories of the twilight and only her body remained. They listened to the carol-singing, and sat round the hall-fire till midnight, but Sibyl said nothing to any one of her twilight ramble. Alice wondered at her silence, and was vaguely pained and disappointed, and when Gervase in bidding her "good-night" pressed her hand lingeringly, she returned the pressure, and was glad to think there was at least one on whom she could absolutely rely, and whose care for her nothing could abate.

CHAPTER IV.

SPIRITS.

Although the one dream which promised brightness to his clouded life had just been dissipated, Edward Annesley drove back to Gledesworth in no despondent frame of mind. The evening sky shone with a holier lustre than usual ; his horse seemed to fly like some air-borne immortal charger, instead of prosaically trotting over the hard roads. It was as if he had attempted to enter a room full of music and mirth, and had found himself instead in the dim cool spaces of some hoary cathedral, listening to solemn prayer cadences and deep organ thunders.

When he reached home he found a card with a half-forgotten name upon it, "Major McIlvray," and was told that the Major, hearing he would return that evening, had promised to call again on the chance of finding him, which he did.

Major McIlvray's regiment had been sent on foreign service a few months after the death of Paul Annesley, with whom he had become well acquainted after his first introduction to him at the meet at the Traveller's Rest. He had recently returned to England, and was stationed at a large garrison town, within two hours of Gledesworth, whence he had come that day intending to return before night. At one time Edward Annesley had been in the habit of meeting Major McIlvray constantly, and had been on sufficiently intimate terms with him to find fault with him and turn his foibles into good-humoured ridicule ; but he had now become such a solitary, that he scarcely remembered how to welcome friends, and received the Major with a grim coldness

that would have discomfited most people, looking at him as much as to say, "What on earth do you want?"

Major McIlvray was not easily rebuffed; he did not appear to notice the coldness of his reception, and sat by the fire with his usual composure, making commonplace observations in the spasmodic drawl which he affected, and secretly studying Edward's face, and comparing him with his former self.

When he heard that he was passing the night at the village inn, Edward asked him to transfer his quarters to Gledesworth, which he at once consented to do, to the surprise of Annesley, who only asked him as a matter of form, a form he had almost forgotten to use, so much of a recluse had he become.

"My mother," said Major McIlvray, "remembers meeting you at some dance at her house. You came up from Aldershot with me. Glad if you would call when in town."

"She is very good. I don't—visit much," he replied.

"Find it a bore? So do I. But do as Romans do."

The blood rushed darkly to Edward's face. McIlvray had not been long in England, he remembered; it was probable that he had heard nothing of the imputation which rested upon him. Yet Lady McIlvray was in the way of hearing it. He relapsed again into the grimness which McIlvray's friendliness had for a moment dissipated, and began to wonder to what he was indebted for this unexpected visit. Presently his guest observed that there were a great many liars in the world. But Edward remembered that David had made a more sweeping observation to the same purpose, and he had himself discovered the fact so early in life as to think it too obvious for comment.

During dinner Major McIlvray said that he had heard so much scandal since his return that he was sick of it. Edward turned hot again and looked fiercely across the table so as to meet the other's eyes. But that other went on tranquilly enjoying his dinner, and spoke of Colonel Disney and other artillery officers whom he had been meeting recently, and of the changes and promotions which had occurred among them.

"Never believe a word I hear," he added with apparent inconsequence, "especially when I know it to be lies."

Annesley asked him point-blank if he had heard any rumours respecting him.

"Heard them all," he replied tranquilly. "Widiculous bosh. Disney an old woman."

This was comforting. Once he had despised McIlvray

as a shallow coxcomb full of affectations, redeemed by some good points. Yet he had such solid stuff in him as refused to be turned from belief in a friend.

"Wanted you to leave the service," the Highlander continued.
"We respect you for not giving in."

Yet Annesley's mind misgave him ; McIlvray might not have heard all, he too might come to disbelieve in him. He frankly told McIlvray that he was the only man who fully discredited the imputations that were cast upon him, and something in the unexpected loyalty of this undemonstrative *nil admirari* spirit touched him to such an extent, that he let something escape of the bitterness which weighed upon him.

"Soon live it down. Nothing like pluck," McIlvray commented ; and after that the evening passed swiftly and pleasantly, such an evening of frank companionship as Annesley had not passed for years.

Whether it was the influence of the genial season, or of that potent national beverage which expands the hearts and stimulates the wits of North Britons, is uncertain, but something effected a transformation in Major McIlvray that Christmas Eve. The enthusiastic Celt emerged from beneath the thin veneer of what for want of a better name may be called the languid swell. In those days the masher was not ; the beau, the dandy, the blood, the buck, and the exquisite had long since passed into shadowy memories ; but the swell, the heavy swell, diffused a gracious fragrance upon the air of Piccadilly, and entranced the beholder by the graceful sweep of his whiskers, the calculated curl of his moustache, the slimness of his umbrella, the scantiness of his vocabulary, the immovable gravity of his demeanour, and his impenetrable indifference to all things terrestrial and celestial. He alone among the sons of men attempted to practise the doctrines preached by the garrulous sage of Chelsea on the ineffable beauty of silence, reducing such speech as necessity forced from him to an elegant minimum, and diminishing the necessary occasions of speech still further, by the simple process of not thinking.

Major McIlvray was one of this brotherhood, the lineal descendant of Alcibiades and Agag, a swell of the first water. Though apparently incapable of the rough and virile consonant *r*, to which his tongue imparted the feminine softness of a liquid *w*, this evening the whiskey, or some more etherea spirit, brought out a fine manly Highland burr in his speech

with a fine manly interest in things in general, together with that indescribable imaginative exaltation which is inseparable from the men of the kilt and tartan. His eyes became dreamy, they seemed to gaze at far-off things ; the breath of the moor and the loch seemed to sigh through his strongly aspirated speech ; he spoke of eerie legends, of haunted corries and pools, of wraiths and apparitions, and of the strange gift of second-sight. But this point was only reached when they were smoking a final cigar towards midnight and listening for the carol-singers. The less imaginative mind of his host, whose Saxon stolidity was dissipated by no more whiskey than good fellowship demanded, was nevertheless sympathetic to these weird themes to an extent that still further stimulated McIlvray, until a listener might have been beguiled into seeing spectral forms in mist-wreathed tartans, and playing upon shadowy bagpipes, floating by the windows in the silent night, and people of weak nerves would have hesitated to leave that solitary firelit chamber for the lonely, echoing corridors of the great empty house, in which only two or three rooms were now ever occupied. An Annesley in the iron armour of Commonwealth-days looked down upon the two men by the fire from his frame on the wall with a sardonic grin, which might have been imagination or the flicker of the leaping fire-light, but which was distinctly perceptible to McIlvray, who asked the history of the grim warrior, and entered with zest into the story of the Gledesworth curse, and was amazed at the present Annesley's proposition of selling it. "I don't suppose it would fetch much," the latter added, "but I should like to get rid of it at any price."

Major McIlvray gazed horror-struck upon him and took some more whiskey ; the Cromwellian Annesley frowned darkly, while his hand apparently moved towards the hilt of his great sword.

The living Annesley looked at the fire in silence for a few seconds and then spoke, as one who longs, yet fears, to disburden himself of a secret.

"And you are really convinced that it was your brother's wraith you saw that day when the mist lifted from the hill?" he asked.

"Perfectly. He died at that hour precisely."

Annesley paused again, then he began to narrate what had occurred to him in the previous summer.

It was on the shores of Lake Leman ; he was making an excursion with his sisters and brother from Veytaux to the hills

above it. They had walked far, resting at mid-day in a pine-wood ; it was now evening, and they were sitting on some broken ground just below the Dent de Jaman, making their evening meal off bread and cheese and thin white wine procured from a chalet near. All were facing the lake, which spread far beneath them, beautiful in the long, slanting radiance of the setting sun ; above the lake, towered the massive pile of the Dent du Midi, its seven snowy peaks rose-red in the sinking light.

"We shall see the *Alpen-Glühn* to-night," said Sibyl Rickman, who was one of the party ; "look at the Midi."

Thus they were all looking, when Annesley was aware of something which made the hair of his flesh stand up.

He was behind the others and on slightly higher ground, thus the falling and passing of a swift shadow breaking the western sunbeams touched him alone, and he turned and saw—a face. The dark blue eyes burning with inward fire, the black crisp hair, the scar on the cheek were unmistakable, and had not changed apparently since the day he last saw them, the day of Paul Annesley's death.

For it was truly the face of Paul, though clean-shaven, and the head of Paul, though tonsured and rising from the dress of a monk ; the long white robe glowing incandescent in the sun's rich light, the passionless features wearing an unearthly calm were those of a monk, yet how should a monk have the dark, blazing, blue eyes and scarred face of Paul Annesley ?

Edward Annesley's heart stood still and his mouth grew parched as he gazed, but an instant truly—for the phantom figure passed swiftly and silently without pause—yet an instant in which his thoughts were so many and so disquieting that it seemed an eternity. The white figure, after the one brief burning gaze in passing, vanished behind the rocky broken ground ; but as soon as Annesley could shake off the nightmare-stiffness which paralysed his limbs, he too disappeared behind the broken mass and saw or thought he saw a ghost-like figure, sinking rapidly down the declivity of the little ravine beneath him, from which the sun had already disappeared. Down the declivity Edward dashed, but the figure was nowhere to be seen, a far-off white streak proved on closer inspection to be a waterfall. A black fir-wood lay in the direction the phantom had taken ; into this Annesley plunged, his blood was up now and he was determined to know the cause of this temporary cheating of

the senses. The wood climbed a slope facing the east ; it was nearly night there in the thick and heavy shadows. The phantom monk was nowhere to be seen ; Edward had now made a long and hot pursuit, and the distant *jödln* of his brother warned him that there was no time to lose in rejoining his party, whose way lay in the opposite direction and who already bid fair to be belated.

So there was nothing for it but to return, pale and breathless, and unable to give a rational account of his sudden flight ; for upon asking the others if they had seen a white monk go by, they laughed and told him he had been dreaming, and rallied him unmercifully upon his distraught appearance. He therefore said no more, but descended the hill-side full of disquieting thoughts, and from that moment had never opened his lips upon the subject till now.

"Why should my cousin's spirit appear to me ?" he asked Major McIlvray at the close of his narrative. "In all your stories, there was a purpose in the apparition—a warning of some kind."

"It was not Paul Annesley's spirit," returned McIlvray with decision.

"Then what was it?" asked Annesley, whose nerves were still quivering from the memories he had just evoked, and who was surprised at the scepticism displayed by so ardent a ghost-seer as Major McIlvray.

"That was very strange that he should come as a monk," replied McIlvray, who, in spite of his scepticism, was excited by the story, "ferry strange. He was not a Catholic even, why would he appear as a monk? No, Annesley, it was not a spirit, that passing figure. It was a living monk that was passing, and his eyes were dark blue and some mark was on his face, and in that moment he was very like Paul Annesley. I have met a man who was very like me. He was in the Hussars ; it was sometimes unpleasant, such mistakes were made. Or, I will tell you ; you had been thinking, thinking of that poor fellow, your cousin, and a bird was flying past making a shadow, and you turned quickly ; the sunshine was dazzling and your imagination painted the face of Paul Annesley on the air. You had been seeing these white Carthusians in France, and you were thinking, it may be, of spirits and white garments, and so you embodied all in one figure of your cousin in a monk's garb. Yes ; that is how it would be," he added with an air of conviction as he

relighted the cigar, which in his excitement had been suffered to go out, "that is how it would all happen."

The explanation, though logical, was inconsistent in a man who believed in second-sight and apparitions, and it did not convince the more practical and literal mind of Annesley.

"It was the face of Paul Annesley," he repeated. "His was no common face, and it is beyond possibility that another face should be marked with that peculiar scar. I am as certain that he looked me face to face that night as I am certain that I am the owner of this house."

McIlvray smiled and looked thoughtfully into the fire for a moment before he spoke. "That is, indeed, being certain," he then said, "I will dispute no more. But it is strange that no one believes like an unbeliever. For you said to-night, that you did not believe in apparitions."

"Or in the curse of Gledesworth," Edward replied with a faint smile. "It is true, McIlvray, that nothing is so consistent as inconsistency."

"Well! I will tell you one thing," continued McIlvray. "If I were in your place I would never speak of this thing again."

"I never shall," he replied, frozen back to his usual reserve by this unexpected incredulity. The last of the final cigars was by this time smoked. The night was wearing on into Christmas morning and they went to bed.

Edward did not sleep. He thought of Sibyl's face as he had seen it in the mingled light of sunset and moonrise. He was very grateful to her, he felt ready to spend the last drop of his blood for her. She had given him the elixir of life, hope. The more he pondered on what she had said respecting Alice, the more he believed in the possibility of winning her after all. McIlvray's loyalty had given him renewed hope in another direction; it is something to be believed in, if by only one dispassionate human being.

So thinking, he sank peacefully to sleep towards dawn, dreaming happily of walking with Alice through flowery meadows steeped in golden light and ringing with mysterious music.

CHAPTER V.

THE VACANT CHAIR.

Alice soon heard what had taken place in the twilight of Christmas Eve. The fact that Mrs. Rickman had been told of Edward Annesley's intentions towards her daughter, and that Sibyl had been obliged to confess to her mother that she could not entertain his proposals, was sufficient to ensure Alice's knowledge of the whole history. Mrs. Rickman's nature was transparent and sympathetic; all her innocent thoughts and guileless hopes and fears were shared with those about her, and Alice, upon whom she depended most, enjoyed the most ample share of her confidences. Until Mrs. Rickman had "talked things over" with some sympathetic listener, she was unable to get any firm mental grasp of facts.

"I cannot understand Sibyl," her mother commented to Alice, "she was evidently struck with him from the first. Every one noticed it, and we all thought his visits were for her. Your uncle was thunderstruck when he asked for you, and I have always thought, my dear, and so has Gervase, that some little jealousy or pique occasioned that proposal, especially as you had never given him the slightest encouragement. There are many things against the match, it is true; but Sibyl is not so young as she was, and she really is very blue, poor dear! Her father and I sadly fear that she will be an old maid. And I cannot help thinking that she cares for him."

"If she did, it would be her secret, not ours," Alice said. "Let us not discuss it; it is not fair. Perhaps it may take place after all," she added, inconsequently, "especially if not talked about."

Gervase's anger was too deep for words when he learnt that Sibyl had deliberately thrown away the chance of happiness that he had so carefully plotted and arranged for her. He was still firmly convinced that no other marriage would be possible to her, and this conviction was confirmed by a carefully guarded conversation he had with her, a conversation in which, as far as words went, she proved more than a match for him. But when people know each other as well as this brother knew his sister, words are but clumsy symbols of thought, especially when associated with such a tell-tale face as Sibyl's, a face upon which

the slightest emotion raised a corresponding change of colour and outline. He was angry with Sibyl for thus unexpectedly crossing his purpose, but, of course, he was far more angry with Annesley, and attributed the failure of his suit to some clumsiness on his part.

"These good-looking fools do at least know how to make love commonly," he thought. He even hinted this want of dexterity vaguely to Alice, who quickly made him see that the subject was not one to which she would permit any reference.

With February came the opening of Parliament, and the fluttering interest of seeing Gervase's name in the debates, all of which Mr. Rickman now read regularly for the first time in his life. Politics now ran high at Arden Manor, although a singular unanimity of party feeling prevailed; no meal was taken without the spice of those magic names, Disraeli, Gladstone and Bright. When Alice went for a few weeks to stay with Mrs. Walter Annesley, and accompany her on a short visit to London, the same political enthusiasm, centering about the same individual, prevailed at her table, and the two ladies one night went to the Ladies' Gallery and were eye-witnesses to the spectacle of Gervase in the act of serving his country. Alice subsequently narrated the details of this moving scene to the hero's parents; told how he sat at ease with folded arms on one of the comfortable benches, and listened to a long debate, sometimes making notes, and sometimes yawning till the tears came in his eyes, and how, when a division occurred, he solemnly went on his own side and did his duty like a man. And somehow the more Gervase was deified by those dear old people, the more warmly did Alice feel towards him, and the more enthusiastic Sibyl waxed upon the political topics which were especially her brother's, the dearer both brother and sister became to her.

Then a great sorrow visited that tranquil hearth; Mrs. Rickman's guileless and simple spirit passed away, after a brief sharp illness.

Hers was one of those unselfish and unsophisticated natures that make little stir and emphasis in life, natures which people take for granted, of the beauty of which they are not conscious until they pass away, leaving a blank that nothing can fill. She always had good health, and her sudden illness, though it surprised every one as an unaccustomed event, caused no alarm in the house, until one night when the doctor said that

her son must come immediately if he wished to see her alive. In her last moments she spoke to Alice of Gervase, and said how much she had their marriage at heart, and Alice could but say that she would think of her last wishes, and so give the parting spirit peace.

Almost paralysed by the shock of this bereavement, they sat round the hearth the night after the funeral, and each almost wondered why the familiar figure did not come in and take the accustomed armchair. Mr. Rickman, aged and broken, sat in the opposite chair ; Alice was by his side, and Sibyl, exhausted by the tempestuous grief to which she had given free vent, sat on the rug at her feet with her head supported against Alice, who with one hand stroked the daughter's feverish cheek, and with the other fondled the stricken father's hand. Gervase sat by Alice in front of the fire, pale and silent as the others.

Like many an only son, he had graciously and as a matter of course accepted his mother's affection, which at times had even bored him, and when the final scene occurred, he gave little outward token of grief, beyond one brief cry which seemed torn from him of, "Now she will never know." He made all necessary arrangements with perfect calm, and supported his broken, half-stupefied father through the most trying scenes without once losing his own self-control. Now all was done that could be done, life was about to resume its everyday aspect, he was to leave them the next morning, and there the bereaved family sat, silent with sorrow, and the slow minutes dragged heavily on. Alice tried at first to get them to talk, and started several commonplace topics ; but Mr. Rickman seemed too dazed by his trouble, Sibyl too exhausted, and Gervase too full of thought to listen to her, so she desisted, and contented herself with the comfort she knew Mr. Rickman and Sibyl derived from the silent touch of her hands. Her own grief was perhaps as deep as Sibyl's, though more silent, and it pained her a little that the being most dear to the dead, Gervase, was the least affected by her loss. His sphinx-like face, on which she almost feared to gaze at this time, gave no clue to what was passing within, yet she thought that perhaps more sorrow than people suspected was concealed by it, and wondered at the savage suppression men put upon their feelings, when ever they are in the least degree creditable to them.

While she was thus musing, Gervase in his stony silence had been realizing what his mother was to him and how irretrievable

was his loss. Old memories and events of his boyhood had been rising before him, he had almost forgotten the silent companions of his grief, when suddenly, stirred by some unusually poignant recollection, he began to sob with vehemence.

This thrilled through the hearts of the others with pain, not unmixed with a comforting warmth. The old man, whose grief was beyond tears, stirred, sighed, and shook his head ; Sibyl sprang up, and threw her arms round her brother ; Alice felt a stronger movement of the heart towards Gervase in his sudden abandonment to his grief than she had ever felt before ; she felt, too, that that moment made her his.

He quickly mastered himself and recovered his usual self-control. Sibyl did the same, and Alice feared to give him the token of sympathy that her heart desired, lest he should again give way. So they sat on in silence as before ; yet not quite as before, for each felt a fresh bond in that spasm of common anguish, and presently Gervase left the room in silence, and returned no more that night. The next morning he bid the three good-bye, and though he said nothing, and sought no private interview, he knew by the look in Alice's face that his heart's desire was obtained at last, and went away comforted.

Alice devoted herself to Sibyl and Mr. Rickman, who was too crushed for a long time to take any interest in his scientific pursuits, and only went into his study to sit idly brooding in his chair. She brought him beetles, plants, and strange stones to no effect, until at last she contrived to purchase a very rare old coin for him.

This roused him, his eyes kindled at the sight of the treasure, which he eagerly took and carefully examined, and Alice was amply rewarded for the pains she had taken to hunt out and buy the coin by hearing him start off in his old familiar fashion on a long and learned lecture on the coin, and the days in which it was struck. The next thing was to get some one to dispute its genuineness, and this with some diplomacy Alice and Sibyl contrived between them ; a hot discussion raged, letters were written in antiquarian journals, and finally a long pamphlet was begun.

Then it was that Mr. Rickman began to talk of his loss, a sure sign that the worst sting of it was past ; and one day he told Alice that he should not live long, but that his one hope was to see his son happily married and his grandchild born before he died.

Spring days were growing bright, Gervase had written to say he should be at the Manor next day, and Alice fully realized that she must now definitely and irrevocably bind herself.

In the last few years she had deeply pondered the mystery of life, and the ends and aims of human existence, pondered them as the young never do and never can, save under the discipline of heavy sorrow and distracting doubt. Ever since the fateful day of Paul Annesley's death she had ceased to take everything for granted, and to expect sunshine and mirth as the natural inevitable ingredients of life ; she had descended into the hell of suffering and there searched deeply for the few realities which lie hidden under the multiform masks and phantasms which surround eager youth on every side. To earthly happiness she had been called to bid a sorrowful farewell, and having rid herself of that expectation of joy which makes life so complex, she had been free to consider in those silent and dark depths that, after all, life has but one problem to offer, how to do one's duty.

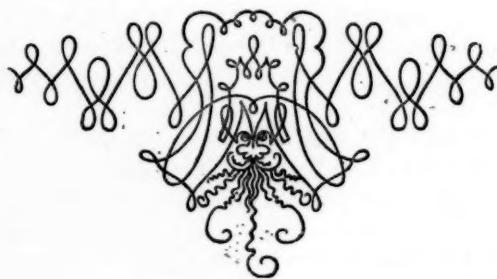
This how had caused her much conflict, conflict continually settled by the urgency of some near and obvious duty, which circumstance presented to her and which she devoutly welcomed. But now that circumstance seemed to offer her one supreme sacrifice, now that a life rich in possibilities needed hers and the decisive moment had arrived, the sacrifice seemed hard, the secret inmost self revolted against it.

She went into the dim silence of the shadowy church ; she looked at the tablet to Paul Annesley's memory ; she recalled her vigil in that church, which ended in the rosy summer dawn ; she visited her adopted mother's fresh grave. Then she went to the belfry and conjured back the vision of Edward and Sibyl among the Christmas hollies, when Edward had asked Sibyl to be his wife.

This was in the afternoon, and when she returned from her solitary pilgrimage, Gervase was just arriving. That evening there was joy once more beneath the beloved roof ; Gervase and Alice were formally engaged. Mr. Rickman sat by the fire with a satisfied air, contemplating the figure of Alice at the piano accompanying Gervase, who stood near her, on his violin.

Sibyl sat near with clasped hands, and eyes full of tears. She refused to interrupt their music with her own singing ; they were playing so exquisitely, she said. And Alice's soul was at peace.

They could not be married for some months, and it was agreed to say nothing of the engagement for the present. They were to live at Arden when not in London, Mr. Rickman and Sibyl remaining with them in separate apartments, which the size of the house permitted, though of course great changes and refittings would have to be made. Gervase had virtually retired from legal practice, though his name remained in the firm, and he was bound to see those clients who could not dispense with him. After all, there was not much wrong with human affairs, he reflected. His purposes were in the main being effected. He had his heart's desire; he could bid his soul be merry and take its ease, because much goods were laid up for it, and he heard no deep low voice murmuring in the ear of conscience, "Thou fool!"



Notes of the Month.

A GOOD deal of correspondence has appeared recently touching the relative merits, from an author's point of view, of magazines and newspapers as a medium for the publication of novels. We confess that we have not yet experienced any of the alleged difficulties in competing with Mr. Tillotson's *Syndicate*: there will always be a large class of readers who prefer the luxury of bold type, fine paper and a well-spaced page to the necessarily cramped columns and rough appearance of a local newspaper; and this is just the class of reader by which we fancy most of our leading novelists desire to be appreciated. So that while we do not deny that the newspaper syndicate may hold out certain financial inducements, occasionally irresistible, we believe that the literary public who subscribe to periodicals will find authors always more anxious for their suffrages than for the undiscriminating mass vote of the *Syndicate* reader, and always ready, therefore, to help in maintaining the high standard admittedly achieved in the serial fiction of magazines.

How long are we to suffer from the unfair postal regulations which handicap monthly publications to an outrageous extent in comparison with the weeklies? The postage of a single number of 'MURRAY'S MAGAZINE' is three-pence, and we have just weighed a weekly journal which, though nearly half as heavy again, can be transmitted for a halfpenny. There is no longer any pretence that a newspaper must contain news, although no doubt the cheap newspaper rate of postage was instituted in order to facilitate the prompt distribution of intelligence throughout the kingdom. Even in that respect we defy any one to show that our pages do not contain as much news as many of our weekly contemporaries; the distinction of being issued "at intervals of not more than seven days" is purely arbitrary and artificial. In America we are informed that monthly periodicals can be posted for a halfpenny per pound, instead of, as here, per two ounces; though the distances in the United States and the consequent expense to the Post-Office are far greater.

The public indignation which is now so easily aroused by the mere mention of a sinecure office or an unearned pension would surely have been visited in full measure upon the Rev. Thomas Thurlow had he survived to the present day. This gentleman, who died in 1874, was at the time of his death in receipt of the extraordinary annuity of

£11,380, paid him in compensation for offices which he had formerly held. He had been Patentee in Bankruptcy, and when the office was abolished in 1832 Mr. Thurlow became entitled to the full annual value of the fees and emoluments reckoned on an average of three years; the compensation thus provided gave him an income of £7352 a year for the rest of his life. He also had the good fortune to be "Clerk of the Hanaper," and, this office being likewise abolished in 1853, he received a further annual pension of about £4000. Mr. Thurlow must therefore have acquired nearly £400,000 of public money during the long period of his two pensions.

Commercial education may be at a low ebb in this country, but it is some consolation to feel that there are other nations in the same plight, so far, at least, as knowledge of foreign languages is concerned. The original lies before us of the following genuine specimen of "English as she is wrote," which has been given us by the publisher of this magazine, to whom it was addressed by a Hungarian firm :—

"At traduction hungarien of the work —— we want a conception. For hwat we nows you are in possession of thisc; we require for there your answar if you will please to cede us for a raison, naible price. Respecting to right of traduction we beg at that fine your kind answar.

regh honnerouble,"

(Signature).

Many inquiries have been made as to the nature of the weapon carried by the bronze fusilier at the south-west corner of the new Wellington Statue. It is a spontoon, a species of halberd, such as was carried by infantry sergeants at the time of the Peninsular War and Waterloo.

Amid the bewildering multitude of theories which have been broached with reference to the article on the Bismarck Dynasty, published in the *Contemporary Review* for February, it has been too readily assumed that the article was the work of an author possessing special opportunities of observation and knowledge. The fact is, we believe, that a mass of interesting matter was placed in the hands of the Editor, and he was at liberty to choose whomever he pleased for the task of putting the material into shape. It need not, therefore, be taken for granted that the actual writer had any special acquaintance with the Court or the political society of Berlin. He was probably only some expert journalist on whom Mr. Bunting could rely to dress up the communicated material in the most telling and attractive form. Internal and external evidence alike point to Northumberland Street as the quarter from which the article emanated.

Mr. Augustine Birrell's recent lecture at the Westminster Town Hall, on Edward Gibbon, will sustain and enhance the author's reputation,

already justly high, as an appreciative critic and a master of pleasant style. It is to be regretted that Mr. Birrell's unfamiliarity with the practice of the platform prevents him from making the most of his points, and hinders him in marking the transitions from grave to gay, and from his own discourse to the illustrative quotations. Like most lecturers who read from manuscript, he has the appearance of being in presbyterian phrase, "terribly tied to the paper," and the natural advantage of an admirable voice is neutralized by defective elocution. However, a larger audience than that of the Westminster Town Hall will be able to profit by Mr. Birrell's witty and wise description of the great historian, when the lecture appears, as it is sure to do, in a third series of "*Obiter Dicta*"—though, by the way, the lecturer's carefully prepared and elaborate judgment is as little like an "*Obiter dictum*" as can easily be imagined.

Mr. John Morley, who occupied the chair at the delivery of the lecture, certainly did not err on the side of defective appreciation when he said that Mr. Birrell's criticism was one of the very best which he had ever heard; but if the praise which he bestowed was excessive, he received it back, good measure and running over, when Lord Coleridge placed him in the same category of writers as Cardinal Newman and Lord Tennyson.

Mr. Morley, the man of letters, has nothing but friends and admirers. Mr. Morley, the politician, has a good many critics and perhaps some enemies. All such, if they are men of candid mind, must be glad to note the firmness with which Mr. Morley, as the political and economic disciple of John Stuart Mill, withstood the demands of his socialist supporters at Newcastle for Parliamentary interference with the hours of labour. Legislative handling of economic problems is a matter on which various opinions may be entertained, but there can be no feeling but that of admiration for the manly determination, which, in a day of universal flabbiness, resists pressure and speaks unpalatable truths, even where a Parliamentary seat is jeopardised as the consequence.

Great interest has been aroused by the '*Recollections*,' contributed to the last two numbers of this Magazine, by the venerable Lady de Ros. Details of the great Duke of Wellington are always welcome, and Lady de Ros's sketches of social life in the early part of this century have a historical value. It is interesting to compare her ladyship's account of the Cato Street Conspiracy, and the revolutionary movements which preceded it, with that given by her husband, the late Lord de Ros, in his *Memorials of the Tower of London*, of which he was Governor. Lord and Lady de Ros were not married till four years after the Cato Street Conspiracy, but both were prominent members of London Society at the time when its discovery startled the social and political world.

NOTES FROM PARIS.

The Eiffel tower will be finished, according to announcement, on the 1st of April. The weight of metal employed now reaches seven thousand eight hundred tons ; eight hundred more will be required. The committee has chosen three different kinds of lifts, to be ready for the date above-named. Two will lead to the first platform, where a promenade formed by a series of arcades surrounding the tower is already finished. Two other lifts will go direct from the ground to the second platform ; another will mount from the second platform to the third. The whole ascent will last five minutes ; the cages will hold seven hundred and fifty people. The lifts will be on trial during the whole of April, before being used by the public.

The other buildings of the Exhibition have hitherto progressed slowly, with the exception of the British section, the works of which have been pushed on vigorously by the English contractor and decorator, Mr. Liley, who, whilst a considerable amount of time was wasted elsewhere in verbose meetings of committees, came over alone, looked at the space allotted to him, settled his plans, and then set to work with his assistants in business-like fashion. The French have no idea of doing anything without an immense amount of talking and "red tape ;" nevertheless, they began to be alarmed at length lest they should not be ready, and two thousand workmen have been engaged, and all is now in active progress ; floors are laid down, and the very characteristic detail of a *café* is now ready, and open. There have been, unhappily, many fatal accidents, and although the number of victims has been kept as quiet as possible, it is whispered that it amounts to *two hundred*. A fearful percentage, which it is not easy to explain, when the terrifying works of the Eiffel tower have been attended with only one casualty.

The three main avenues crossing the Exhibition have been painted to represent the colours of the national flag ; one in arcades of blue, the second white, the third red.

The United States are "going ahead" energetically, and little Denmark is showing considerable spirit ; the other nations taking matters more coolly.

The British section is in the first line at present, and the nearest completion of all. The style chosen is the Elizabethan, as being more purely English than any other. On the façade is a shield bearing the arms of Great Britain ; in the vestibule are the armorial bearings of thirty British colonies ; in the interior the divisions are covered with panels, adorned with the red Tudor rose, and the white rose of York, bearing in the centre the arms of forty-two cities of Great Britain. The panels are separated by figures holding festoons. The exhibitors will

be protected from the sun by a hundred blinds, decorated and painted, each one having a width of fourteen feet and a length of twenty-seven.

No advertisements will be allowed, beyond inscriptions in gold letters of a specified size and kind.

Preparations are being made for a dairy, which is expected to do credit to its British origin and organisation.

Nothing is yet known as regards the opening ceremony and final arrangements ; the "Ides of March" are not passed, and many events may take place before the inauguration of the Exhibition.

The Hôtels are, nevertheless, already preparing to receive (and plunder !) their guests ; the prices will not, however, be raised before the beginning of May. Some establishments have decided on accepting pension prices, suitable to different classes of travellers, but they will prove the exception, most hotels absolutely refusing to make any arrangement ; it is, as yet, too soon to mention accommodating houses, as good resolutions may give way before the influx of travellers, and the prospect of a large harvest !

Boulanger is said to have witnessed his triumph at the recent election from behind the curtains of the Café Durand, listening with exultation to the cries of "Vive, Boulanger !" and watching the dense crowd ; occasionally turning to his friends, and saying laughingly, "Tout sa pour Bibi !" (All that for the *darling* !)

He has not yet reached the supreme indifference of Napoleon III., whose immovable countenance never betrayed the slightest emotion in the presence of the wildest popular enthusiasm. When Count Tascher de la Pagerie, on one occasion, expressed his surprise at this, the Emperor answered in his soft, calm voice, "C'est que je connais les hommes, Tascher !"

But Boulanger still believes in the crowd, by whom he is now worshipped ; there is a general feeling of gratitude for what he has done to make the lives of the private soldiers more endurable in these days of enormous armies, when every family has some member in the ranks ; nothing could be more conducive to popularity. The officers have no love for Boulanger, who has vexed and annoyed them in many ways ; but the *men* worship him, and the men's mothers and sisters use all their influence in his favour. Then, again, amongst so many Pretenders who have all shown so much prudence, a man who has something of a dare-devil spirit, and fears not to risk his life, has a great attraction for the masses. "*Il ne craint pas pour sa peau, celui-là,*" is the general saying of the lower classes.

The old Faubourg St. Germain preserves its usual serene indifference ; now the Comte de Chambord has disappeared, they care little who takes his place. The Comte de Paris is accepted by the genuine Legitimists

more as a possible necessary evil than as a really desirable Head of the State ; they cannot forget or forgive the past misdeeds of the House of Orleans. Their principles oblige them now to recognise his lawful right, but they would not be very sorry if their supposed "wishes" were unfulfilled, and few would be enthusiastic enough to prove their devotion by laying down their lives in his service. The old legendary loyalty is gone—with the sunset on the tomb of Goritz !

Some of the young leaders of fashion have taken up the General warmly, and show their feelings by wearing his favourite carnations. The choice of flowers is now a serious consideration in these days of political significance. Violets belong to the Bonapartists ; white pinks and lilies to the "Blanc d'Espagne" partisans of Don Carlos ; the "rose de France" to the Orleanists ; and, finally, carnations to Boulanger. Perhaps for this reason flowers are but little worn as trimmings to ball-dresses. The light tulle skirts, floating freely without any looping up, are simply fastened round the waist by sashes with long ends, interlaced and tied as only Parisian fingers can tie. The richer dresses of thick Lyons stuffs, brocaded with Pompadour designs, are trimmed with real lace and smaller knots of ribbon. The complicated toilettes, so minutely, yet so unintelligibly, described in newspaper articles on fashion, are more often worn by Russians and Americans than by the real French *grandes dames*, whose style is usually simple in detail, but magnificent in general effect.

The ladies who choose to wear carnations place them in their hair, or even wear jewels set as carnations ; two fashionable belles are quoted, one wearing them in rubies, the other in diamonds. Fans are painted also with the favourite flower. But it must be owned that all this political demonstration is confined to a rather flashy set.

Another, and more general craze, is that of the liliputian watches, now placed on every conceivable article to which they can be attached. Fans, card-cases, purses, umbrella-handles, walking-sticks, bracelets, opera-glasses—all have little watches. Some bracelets are extremely pretty, the tiny watches peeping out of a framework of rubies and diamonds, or other precious stones. But it is to be feared that this whim will have the fate of other whims : the toy watches being too small for any practical use or durability. A pretty innovation is a small portrait in miniature, with powdered hair and antique style, instead of the watch, at the corner of card-cases, &c.

We have been asked to give the titles of recent unobjectionable French novels. It is very difficult to find any that are quite satisfactory ; still

we may mention: 'Une Nièce d'Amérique,' by "Maryan." 'Ma Cousine Pot au Feu,' by Léon Tinseau; 'La Neuvaïne de Colette,' (*Anon.*) 'Messieurs de Citay,' by Jacques Bret. We have heard "Chant de Noces," by Henry Greville, highly spoken of; it is but just out, and we cannot take any responsibility from personal knowledge.

Mme. Carette's 'Souvenirs Intimes de la tour des Tuileries,' excited great curiosity, but caused ultimately great disappointment.

Those who are much interested in learning what sort of inkstand was used by a Royal lady, or how her dressing-table was trimmed, may find some amusing particulars; but there is very little worth reading. The very position of Madame Carette rendered great reticence necessary; she could not write either about individuals or private Court subjects otherwise than very superficially. Consequently, she minutely describes chairs and tables, and praises everybody. The book is therefore very insignificant. A few pages describing the Empress Eugenie's visit to the cholera patients, and other visits to hospitals and prisons, are interesting.

The private exhibition of pictures at the Cercle Volney attracts a large crowd of visitors. Carolus Duran has two works, both remarkable, but of unequal merit; a really wonderful portrait which seems to come out of the canvas, and which is a masterpiece; the other a female figure with red hair streaming over very white shoulders, half-dressed in red drapery over white. The catalogue entitles it: "Salome," but nothing in the insignificant pink and white face recalls the tigerish nature of the daughter of Herodias. It is not generally liked by the public; the effect of a fore-shortened arm is disagreeable, though it is, no doubt, an artistic *tour de force*; the whole leaves an unsatisfactory impression notwithstanding the merit of execution. There is a very good portrait by Henner; another of Emanuel Arago, by Benjamin Constant; several good portraits of artists, done by themselves, the most remarkable of which is the striking head of Saint Pierre: some female portraits, good in execution, but singularly stiff and inanimate; the heads might belong to hair-dressers' wax figures.

THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.

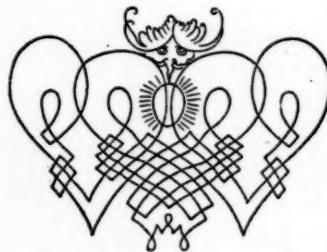
We have had an opportunity of conferring with Mr. Adrian Hope, the energetic secretary of the Children's Hospital, as to the best means of expending any sums forwarded by the readers of 'MURRAY'S MAGAZINE' for the benefit of the Hospital. It will be remembered that the appeal made by the superintendent, Miss Hicks, in our January number was for assistance towards the building-fund, and the sum of £63 11s., acknowledged last month, has been appropriated to that object. But Mr. Hope, feeling that our readers ought to have some more tangible and

visible mark of their liberality, has most kindly volunteered to institute immediately a 'MURRAY'S MAGAZINE' cot in the Hospital, in support of which all future donations will be employed.

The cost of maintaining a cot is £40 a year, of permanently endowing one, £1000. We propose in the first instance to endeavour to collect the first-named sum, and then again to avail ourselves of Mr. Hope's experience as to whether we should do most good in forming the nucleus of an endowment fund for the first cot, or in contributing to the annual support of a second.

It was not without considerable hesitation that we decided upon appealing to our readers in this way on behalf of any charitable institution; we are aware that some may think it outside our business; but possessing as we do, month by month, the privilege of access to many a happy English home, is it not a duty to avail ourselves of that privilege to the full, if it enables us to enlist recruits in aid of an institution whose good work is unquestionably both blessing and blessed? Our readers need not be afraid that we shall make other appeals for other objects, but we confidently rely upon their rendering very material assistance to the Children's Hospital before the year is out.

Subscriptions should be sent to the Editor, and will be acknowledged every month in our pages.



Correspondence.

The pages devoted to Correspondence are intended not only for broaching fresh subjects on an unlimited variety of topics, but also for brief criticisms or comments upon Articles which appear in the Magazine. The name and address of Correspondents must always be sent (not necessarily for publication), and the Editor cannot undertake to communicate with the writers or return their letters under any circumstances.

THE MERCHANTS MARKS ACT AND BRITISH SHIPPING.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'MURRAY'S MAGAZINE.'

SIR,

Since you refer, in your Notes of last month, to the inconvenience caused by the Merchandise Marks Act to those desirous of importing books from America, perhaps you will allow me to give some instances of the injury to general trade which the working of this Act entails on the country. I happened to be staying with one of the partners in a large firm of shippers at a time when he was nearly driven to desperation by the stoppage at the Customs of more than one of his shipments, on account of alleged infringements of this Act ; and I requested him to allow me to make a note of the chief cases, in which he thought the Act oppressive and injurious. It may possibly interest your readers if you will allow me to give two or three samples, extracted from my notes.

1. A contract was made for shipment of 1000 tons of crockery from Hamburg to America. It was discovered accidentally that in this consignment there were some cups bearing English mottoes, such as "A present to a good child." The Customs were at once informed of this, and their reply was to the effect that such goods could not be allowed to be imported, though only in transit. The case being a hard one, a petition was presented to the Board of Customs ; but it was not till after a delay of two months that a favourable answer was returned, and in the meanwhile the goods were shipped by a foreign line.

2. The firm had been in the habit of shipping American whiskey from Bremen to the United States, but, on the passing of the Act, a charge was brought that the American marks were forged. It is

necessary to state that this American whiskey had always been bonded at Bremen, the exact object of which I am unable to specify. It took two months to convince the Customs of the genuineness of the marks; the consignees in consequence refused further dealings with the firm, and the whiskey now goes by the North German Lloyd Steamers.

3. A shipment of *Dextrine*, which came from Stettin to London in transit to Philadelphia, was trade-marked "Sphinx." This happens to be a German word, and the Act is not contravened. But inasmuch as it happens also to be an English word, the *onus probandi* is thrown on the shippers, and it does not appear to be so simple a matter as it ought, to prove to a thick-headed English official that the word may be also a *bonâ fide* German one.

On such trifling as this does the supremacy of our shipping rest; and it will scarcely surprise your readers to be told that, solely in consequence of the working of the Merchandise Marks Act, a line of steamers is about to be started direct from Hamburg to Philadelphia.

Your obedient servant,
HOLCOMBE INGLEBY.

A WATERLOO EXHIBITION.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'MURRAY'S MAGAZINE.'

SIR,

I have read with deep interest the late correspondence about the Waterloo Ball and the delightful memoir by Lady de Ros. In the list of guests at the Ball are the names of my dear father, my uncle and my grand-uncle—the two former being on the staff of the latter. I have often heard it told that the two brothers met face to face in the heat of the battle, but could not exchange a word!

Through your pages I venture to suggest how very interesting it would be if a "Waterloo Period Exhibition" could be inaugurated.

Will not some influential person organize one? It would produce a mass of invaluable historical relics.

Surely it would be better to have it *now*, instead of waiting till 1915, when so many of us will have joined those heroes who fell in their "silk stockings."

I remain, Sir, yours faithfully,
DAUGHTER, NIECE and GRAND-NIECE
of Waterloo Officers.



Our Library List.

CORRESPONDENCE OF JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY. Edited by GEORGE W. CURTIS. (Portrait. 2 vols. 3os. *Murray.*) These remarkable volumes will, unless we are greatly mistaken, attract much attention and arouse much interest in England. Mr. Motley is known to the public chiefly as the author of a history which has taken a permanent place in English literature, and as having held for a few months the post of United States Minister to our Court. A leading member of that celebrated Boston *coterie*, which included such men as Prescott, Longfellow, Holmes, Emerson and Lowell, he was almost equally familiar with the best society of London, Vienna, and other European capitals. His brilliant descriptive powers enable him to give us pictures of these which are perhaps unsurpassed in vividness and accuracy. His remarks are not those of a mere superficial observer, but of one whose training and ability gave him a peculiar right to speak with authority. Seldom have English customs and English celebrities been described by a more skilful and sympathetic pen.

THE LAST VOYAGE. By LADY BRASSEY. (1 vol. 21s. *Longmans.*) This sumptuous volume can hardly be opened without a pang of regret that its indefatigable and genial authoress is no more. It is in every way equal to its predecessors in the 'Sunbeam' series, which have now become household words, and presents the same characteristics as the former volumes. The track of the yacht runs through the Suez Canal to Bombay, thence, after a brief cruise northwards, to Ceylon, Rangoon, the north coast of Borneo, and the west coast of the Celebes, round Australia from west to east, and then sorrowfully home by the Cape and the Azores. By far the greater portion of this voyage of 36,000 nautical miles was accomplished under sail. The volume further contains an account of an extensive land tour in India. Wherever Lady Brassey landed she was welcomed by all the most distinguished society of the place, and shown all that in the opinion of the inhabitants was best worth seeing. Her progress under these magnificent conditions was a series of splendid pageants. One of the charms of the book is the simplicity of the narrative amid such gorgeous surroundings. A word must be said of the illustrations which adorn almost every page. Mr. Pritchett, especially in the treatment of landscape, has surpassed himself in dainty cleverness.

HOLIDAY PAPERS, by the REV. HARRY JONES (1 vol. 6s. *Smith, Elder & Co.*), are, as their title indicates, a collection of miscellaneous essays written in the intervals of graver work. They have been preceded by a similar volume, and we can well believe that the author's friends were anxious that the series should not be discontinued. Though they make no pretence of being elaborate studies on their several subjects, they are full of the ripe and genial wisdom which comes from long and varied experience in labouring for the good of one's fellow-men. The book is of the kind of which Pascal was thinking when he described his delight at finding "a man" when he had expected to find only "an author." The first paper in the volume recounts some college reminiscences, and several of the subsequent ones deal with dogs and other animals, of which the author is, as might have been expected, a devoted lover. In an essay entitled "Parochialia," Mr Jones narrates his endeavours to extract from aged parishioners, their reminiscences of historical events. One old man's chief impression of Buonaparte's threatened invasion was thus summed up: "There was a lot of beer . . . and some got drunk and some didn't." As some French writer has remarked, the history of a national crisis by a peasant would be a pathetically suggestive document.

LETTERS ON LITERATURE, by ANDREW LANG (1 vol. 6s. 6d. *Longmans*), sparkle with their author's usual graceful sprightliness. The form in which the volume is cast, familiar letters to imaginary correspondents, enables Mr. Lang to adopt a more intimate and personal tone, and, it must be owned, to provide less solid matter than would have been demanded by formal essays. The subjects treated range from Plotinus the Platonist to "some books about red men," and include a letter on the art of book-hunting. On each and all of these topics Mr. Lang furnishes us with many witticisms and some information; but his work is so widely read and admired, and so uniform, that almost every reader of contemporary literature knows exactly what sort of treat is prepared for him when a new volume by Mr. Lang makes its appearance. This is essentially a book in which each critic will be guided in his choice of letters by his individual taste. To our thinking those on Vers de Société and on Red Men are the most attractive, and that on Rochefoucauld (why does Mr. Lang suppress the *La?*) the least satisfactory. A letter on Samuel Richardson is contributed by Mrs. Lang.

WANDERINGS OF A GLOBE TROTTER IN THE FAR EAST, by the HON. LEWIS WINGFIELD (2 vols. 21s. *Bentley*), contains a vividly written narrative of an eighteen months' tour in China, Japan, and the Philippine Islands. Though an enormous mass of literature concerning the two former of these countries is readily accessible, there was still room for the fresh personal impressions of a

traveller and writer as accomplished as Mr. Wingfield. He does not attempt to draw conclusions or point morals, but notes down what he saw and felt, somewhat after the manner of the brothers de Goncourt or other French impressionists. His zeal for enlarging his experiences led him to be present at the torturing of some Chinese criminals, and though he assures us that the nerves of Celestials are far less highly strung than our own, the processes he minutely describes make rather revolting reading. Mr. Wingfield himself narrowly escaped death on a subsequent occasion when his ship, crowded with natives, caught fire ; however, he contrived with the other Europeans on board to escape in a boat. On the whole we close these entertaining volumes with a feeling that it is better to read about the Far East than to go there.

CRESSY. By BRET HARTE. (2 vols. *Macmillan.*) The scene of this novel is laid entirely in those Western frontier lands of the States which Mr. Bret Harte has made his own, and contains no description of older and more complicated societies where English readers hold him comparatively at a disadvantage. Whether or no such personages as Mr. and Mrs. McKinstry actually walk the earth in the light of common day, they are endowed with very vivid artistic reality, and for awhile make us forget the vast gulf separating our peaceful law-sheltered lives from regions where the rule of the pistol is supreme, and assassinations are ordinary incidents. McKinstry himself, with a spark of rude chivalry relieving his savagery, is one of the most striking figures that even Mr. Bret Harte has painted ; concerning Cressy, his daughter, it is impossible to feel indifferent ; she sways us with alternate devotion and disgust, and plays as bewilderingly on our hearts as on that of her chief admirer, the young schoolmaster. This last—Mr. Ford—is rather obtrusively “sicklied o'er with the pale cast” of a more advanced civilisation. The interest in the plot is capitally sustained, and all the knots are not untipt till the last page. A feature in the book is the charming picture of child-life, the school children forming a sort of chorus to the drama enacted by their elders.

FRENCH JANET, by SARAH TYTLER (2 vols. *Smith, Elder & Co.*), is a tale of the middle of the last century, the scene being laid principally in Scotland, and partly in Paris, whither the hero, young Allan Wedderburn of Windygates proceeds to complete his education under the charge of his elderly and rationalistic kinsman, Robert Wedderburn of Braehead. While in the French capital young Allan is made much of by a great French lady, the Duchesse de Chalons, and, though half-betrothed to a Scotch girl, falls more or less in love with a cousin and protégée of the Duchesse, the widowed Madame de Sainte-Barbe, who nurses him through a fever. The cautious guardian hurries him away from France, and Madame de Sainte-Barbe is accidentally run over by his carriage and killed. Here the author takes leave of the laws which

regulate the workaday world, and plunges into the supernatural. The number of writers who can impressively call spirits from the vasty deep is exceedingly small, and we think the author has misused her talents in the vain attempt to emulate them. Ghosts apart, the book is carefully and well-written, and the character sketches are decidedly if rather elaborately clever.

BEECHCROFT AT ROCKSTONE. By MISS YONGE. (2 vols. 10s. *Macmillan.*) Miss Yonge's pen has in no way lost its cunning, and here we find her marshalling a family, which baffles counting, with all her accustomed skill through a year's varied and life-like incidents. A soldier-father laid low by an accident in Ceylon, the mother summoned to his side, their young brood scattered amongst relations, make a thoroughly characteristic subject. The interest of the book is centred on that portion of the family which is drafted off on two middle-aged maiden aunts. The contrast with the home-life, the little rubs and difficulties which are bound to arise, the boy and girl atmosphere, as well as that of somewhat priggish maidenhood, are described in a way which is admirably real, and never dull. A romantic element is supplied by a family in unhappy circumstances. The only deviation from the ordinary events of life arises out of Gillian Merrifield's friendship for these victims of misfortune, which she conceals from her aunts. Her thoughtless project of teaching one of the sons Greek, to help him to take Orders, leads to his sending her a valentine, and finally to the fall of a cliff. The return of the parents replaces all the children on that happy pinnacle of home-life which Miss Yonge invests with such wholesome glamour.

FOR FAITH AND FREEDOM. By WALTER BESANT. (3 vols. *Chatto & Windus.*) This is a picturesque tale of the 17th century, and, if it does not enlarge one's knowledge of human nature, it certainly adds to one's stock of historical pictures. The Duke of Monmouth's rebellion, his triumphant progress through the western counties, as well as his speedy overthrow, are described with much spirit and no appearance of effort. The heroine, whose path is as thickly strewn with lovers as it is with misfortunes, takes part in the rebellion. Married to the man she hates in order, as she thinks, that she may save the lives of her brother and her two favourite suitors, she escapes from him only to be shipped off to Barbadoes, where she is sold to a brutal slave-owner. The adventures that ensue are very remarkable, but they make one regret that Mr. Besant has not confined himself to this island. Though the characters have considerable grace, they are somewhat dream-like, and it is quite painful not to be able to feel the faintest emotion when the high-minded young doctor, in order that his friend may be freed from the marriage into which she was entrapped, deliberately lets the villain die.